THE PURITAN SOCIAL ETHIC: CLASS AND CALLING IN THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS OF SETTLEMENT IN NEW ENGLAND

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ABSTRACT

The moral imperatives of Puritanism applied to men not only as worshipers and church members, but as participants in organized society. Though the Puritan reign in England proved short and ephemeral, the Puritans who came to New England did have a chance to establish society according to their rigorous and demanding ideology. That ideology and the society it produced form the subjects of this dissertation.

While much of Puritan theory was not new, its application for the first time in a new world unencumbered by pre-existing institutions led to European social theory becoming American social reality and to the theory taking on new meanings and richness from its redefinition through its results in action. Puritan social theory called for a curious combination of voluntarism and subordination that once put into practice resulted in unprecedented congeries of contradictory institutions. Yet despite its internal tensions Puritan society in New England managed to function until remodeled by the great ideological changes attendant on the American Revolution.

Introductory chapters deal with the Puritan concepts of order and love, discussing both their traditional and original elements and the ways in which each served as the basis for a society organized on the principle of inequality. Four subsequent chapters discuss the implications for political, social and economic activity of insisting that inequality be voluntarily consented to by the unequal, inferiors as well as superiors. The chapter on politics contains a detailed exposition of the early political and constitutional history of Massachusetts that shows how the colony's political system became a "mixt aristocracie" because of the nonrepresentative character of the office of magistrate despite mass white adult male suffrage. A chapter on the New England Puritan attitude towards wealth agrees generally with the Weber thesis, denies any fundamental split existed between the New England merchants on the one hand and the ministers and magistrates on the other, and attempts to demonstrate that the ambiguities of the Puritan attitude towards this world led to tensions resolvable only through ritual self-chastisement in jeremiads and lamentations over alleged social decline. This chapter takes a skeptical attitude towards claims, ancient and modern, of the submergence of first generation piety in second and third generation worldliness. A fifth chapter considers the New England view of poverty and the colonies' systems of poor relief as well as the peculiar Puritan fondness for "affliction," while a concluding chapter concentrates on the habit of social deference and ends with a brief summary of the effects of the Revolution on thought and attitude in New England. A statistical appendix provides evidence of a much larger freemanship in seventeenth century Massachusetts than was previously supposed.

FOR THE

MEMORY OF MY FATHER

PREFACE

The preface of a doctoral dissertation in American history generally begins by emphatically pointing out the unprecedented nature of the study that follows. Candid writers sometimes admit that other historians have treated their general subject area before, but they quickly add that no one else has ever dealt with their particular topic, explored in detail this archieve or that set of papers or looked at the general problems involved through the clarifying focus of their very specific subject. In breaking with that tradition I have at least one basis on which to claim to be different.

Others have been here before me. I have examined the teachings of the New England Puritans on man's role in society, on the ethics of his relationships to other men as fellow members of the same civil community, and I have also tried to give some account of the application and relevance of these teachings to the actual conduct of life in seventeenth century New England. While no one may have chosen to take precisely this approach before, the field itself is hardly a new one. Many other works have covered in whole or part the social teachings of the Puritan churches, so many, indeed, that references to them, either acknowledging my debts or taking issue with their conclusions, account in large measure for the substantial length of some of my footnotes.

My excuse for going over a subject which some might consider exhausted must be that if I have used old materials, I have tried to present them in new contexts and to endow them occasionally with new and, I hope, more significant meanings. The Appendix does present some data not available previously, but this thesis' claim to originality must stand or fall mainly on the strength of its interpretations.

After that confession a few more are needed to outline some of the limitations of the study. I have concentrated on a period of roughly a century, the span of time from 1630 to about 1730, though I have paid some attention to English and Puritan thought in the first third of the seventeenth century and also gone beyond 1730 when necessary to complete the story. Sixteen thirty as a starting point needs no explanation, but the reasons for the choice of 1730 as a terminal date may not seem so obvious. In the first place a century is quite enough for a doctoral dissertation to cover. Secondly, by the mid-eighteenth century the ideas under discussion and the type of effect they produced on human behaviour had so changed from the original and become so complex it would take at least another dissertation to carry their history up to the Revolution. Finally, it seemed wise to stop before the upheaval of the Great Awakening and the changes it produced. Chapter VII, however, does contain a concluding section on the effects of the American Revolution on Puritan social theory, a discussion admittedly schematic at best but essential for giving an idea of the direction in which I believe Puritan ideology was moving.

Throughout I have directed my attention almost entirely to the free white adult male and considered the ways in which Puritans handled the treatment of women, children, servants, slaves and other races only in so far as they formed part of their general view of society. Indian relations in seventeenth century New England, as well as the family, slavery and servitude, have already received far more detailed treatment than anything I might offer, and the servile status of white indentured servants was temporary anyway, generally lasting no more than seven years. I have not attempted to treat nonchurch members separately from church members because I do not believe they differed in their social attitudes or that the majority of "unregenerate" New Englanders opposed the dominant ethic of their community.

Geographical divisions have involved their own particular difficulties. Often where I have written "New England" it might have been more prudent to put "Massachusetts." Yet the first term seemed just as reasonable as the second, for ideas are not normally respecters of the vague boundary lines set down in colonial charters, and the people of Massachusetts at any given time accounted for at least half the population of New England as a whole and usually more. If formal statements and law codes give any indication, social theory in Connecticut and Rhode Island did not deviate very sharply from the doctrines held in the Bay Colony. As for the application of theory to fact, a good deal more information happens to be available for Massachusetts than for any of the other Puritan colonies, and that in turn produced a more detailed coverage.

All dates in the text are as they appear in the Julian calendar, including "double dating" where they fall between January 1st and March 25th, as in "February 3, 1636/7." If an event took place in the period ordinarily indicated by double dating, and I have referred to it by the year alone without also mentioning the specific date, then I have used the year as given in the Gregorian calendar. For example, if an event happened on February 3, 1636/7 and the text identifies it by the year alone without giving the month and day, it is said to have taken place in 1637.

The seventeenth century did not spell as we do, did not use fixed spellings in fact, and that has presented some problems of transcription. When the transcribed passage comes from a document which was printed in the seventeenth century, such as a sermon or law code, I have copied it exactly except that I have uniformly adopted the modern "s" and substituted "j" for "i" and "v" for "u" and vice versa where necessary. Transcribing documents like diaries, letters and court records, which existed in the seventeenth century in manuscript only and were not printed until relatively recent times, developed into a more complicated problem. The editors of these documents often employed standards that departed sharply from my own, some, like the editor of the Massachusetts Bay Company Records, using a more literal system of transcription, others, like James

Savage in his edition of the Winthrop Journal, modernizing their manuscripts' texts to a much greater extent than I would have. In the latter case I have reproduced the texts exactly, in the former changed them only so far as to bring them in line with the rules laid down by Julian Boyd in his edition of the Jefferson papers. This entailed all the changes just mentioned for printed works and also the rendering of "&" as "and" and "y" as "th" where it stood for the Anglo-Saxon thorn, and the expansion of all abbreviations now ordinarily expanded. Except for these changes, I have retained the original spellings in all quotations.

No one can complete a work of this sort without relying on the help of others whose contributions it is always a pleasure to acknowledge -- although the responsibility for the final result is, of course, my own. In particular, I would like to thank Mr. H.C. Eric Middlefort and Miss [redacted] Feldman, the researches of both of whom led me to look into areas that proved very valuable, Mr. Robert Zemsky and Mr. Timothy Breen, who have provided many helpful suggestions and criticisms, and Mr. John Van Zanten, who was kind enough to read the whole thesis over in manuscript. The repeated citation of his works in my notes will give some slight indication of the tremendous debt I owe to Professor Edmund Morgan, my dissertation director, both for his scholarship and his sympathetic encouragement. I would say more did I not know it would embarrass him.

Stephen Foster

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COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

Acts and Resolves: *Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (N.B. Shurtleff ed.; Boston: 1853-54).

Boston Rec.: *Boston Registry Department, Records Relating to the Early History of Boston* (Boston: 1876-1909).

Coll. MHS: *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The arabic number before the abbreviation indicates the series number, the roman numeral after it the volume. Thus 5 *Coll*. MHS, IV would be the fourth volume of the fifth series of the *Collections.*

Essex Cty. Ct. Rec.: *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County Massachusetts* (George F. Dow ed.; Salem: 1911-21).

Inferiour Court of Pleas: *Abstract and Index of the Records of the Inferiour Court of Pleas (Suffolk County Court) Held at Boston 1680-1698* (Historical Survey, Boston: 1940).

Mass. Rec.: *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (N.B. Shurtleff ed.; Boston: 1853-54).

Mather Diary: *The Diary of Cotton Mather, Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Seventh Series, VII-VIII (1911-1912).

NEH&GR: *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.

Publ. CSM: *Publications* of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts.

Publ. MHS: *Publications* of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Sewall Diary: *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, V-VII (1878-1882).

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS
(continued)

Suffolk County Court Record: Records of the Suffolk County Court, 1671-1680, Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts (Boston: 1933), XXIX-XXX.

Winthrop Journal: John Winthrop, The History of New England from 1630 to 1649 (James Savage ed.; Boston: 1853).

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and in the end he created New England. Put baldly the course of human history from *Genesis* 1:1 to 5 *Carolus Rex* appeared that way viewed from the quarterdeck of the *Arbella* as the coast of the New World loomed into sight for the first time one June day in 1630. On board her and the ten other ships that arrived with her or shortly after came, in their own estimation, the most important group of people since the Apostles, about one thousand men, women and children commonly known as "Puritans," all under the overall command of Governor John Winthrop.

Though they would have resented the label "Puritan," Winthrop and his company did own to advocating a thoroughgoing revision and reformation of the church and society of their native England, the purging from both of their popish and "humane" corruptions and their reorganization according to the Word of God. For the church this meant congregational polity and "Calvinist" doctrine, for society something equally complex--something that will take the rest of this dissertation to express.

Any kind of change except for the worse seemed no longer possible in their homeland where King Charles I and William Laud, then Bishop of London, soon to be Archbishop of Canterbury, had suspended Parliament and inaugurated the "Eleven Years Tyranny" that would end in the Long Parliament and finally Civil War and death on the scaffold for them both. In 1630 that bloody and violent conclusion to the [illegible] Peace lay years in the future: for men who thought like Winthrop the time seemed to have come to follow the lead of a company of English Separatists from Scrooby, men so dissatisfied with the Church of England they had broken with it entirely, first going into exile in Leyden and then in 1621 forsaking even the relative comfort of Holland for the arduous but unrestricted life of pilgrims in the "wilderness" of Plymouth on Cape Cod. Only in a new land, nominally still under the authority of King and bishops but actually separated from them by three thousand miles of Atlantic Ocean, did Winthrop's company and those who followed them to New England see any chance of creating the kind of world they wanted.

The massive numbers of settlers who poured into New England after 1630 founded not one colony there but four in addition to the earlier settlement at Plymouth. Winthrop himself established Massachusetts Bay, the largest of the five, which grew so steadily in population some of her settlers under the leadership of the Rev. Thomas Hooker found themselves overcrowded and moved south to found Connecticut in 1636. Two years later Theophilus Eaton and the Rev. John Davenport, newly-arrived and suspicious of the godliness of the Massachusetts colony, established New Haven to the south of Hooker's settlements and maintained a separate existence from the rest of Connecticut until 1664. Rhode Island, the fifth colony, grew out of four separate towns built by a variety of heretics--Antinomians, Gortonites, supporters of Roger Williams--expelled from Massachusetts between 1636 and 1643. All told, the combined policies of Charles and Laud had made England seem unattractive enough for over 15,000 of their Puritan countrymen to emigrate to the more congenial environment of New England in the decade 1630 to 1640.

Yet the new immigrants were not the sorts who combatted error by fleeing it, at least the more reflective of them were not. Just before leaving England the leaders of the 1630 expedition had declared their firm allegiance to the Church of England and Winthrop himself had written much earlier:

> . . . he which would have suer peace and joye in Christianitye, must not ayme at a condition retyred from the world and free from temptations, but to knowe that the life which is most exercised with tryalls and temptations is the sweetest, and will prove the safeste. For such tryalls as fall within compasse of our callinges, it is better to arme and withstande them than to avoide and shunne them.[1]

They had crossed an ocean and come to a strange and unsettled land, but they founded a society designed to benefit England and even all Christendom by serving as a model for the reformation of other churches and other states in what Puritans and non-Puritans alike commonly considered "these last times" before the Second Coming of Christ. While the *Arbella* still rode the Atlantic midway between the Old World and the New, Winthrop delivered to the assembled passengers his Model of Christian Charity, concluding with a warning quoted in whole or part many times afterwards:

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[1] "THE HUMBLE REQUEST OF HIS Majesties loyall Subjects, the Governour and the Company late gone for *New England;* to the rest of their Bretheren in and of the *Church* of England" is in *Winthrop Papers* (Boston, 1929-), II, 231-33; Winthrop's statement is in *ibid.,* I, 209. The theme of the refusal of the Massachusetts Bay settlers to become Separates like their bretheren at Plymouth has been treated by Perry Miller in *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Cambridge: 1933) and Edmund Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma* (Boston: 1958).

> . . . we must Consider that wee shall be as a Citty upon a Hill, the eies of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shal deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world, wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake evill of the wayes of god and all professours for Gods sake; we shall shame the faces of many of gods worthy servants, and cause theire prayers to be turned into Cursses upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going . . . [2]

To build a City upon a Hill they had to build aright. If the Lord carried them safely through the rest of the journey he had signified his consent to a covenant between the people of New England and Himself, promising them temporal prosperity in return for their attempting to live a righteous life in conformity with His will. All societies had such covenants, but New England would be unique in that its people must live not only a good life, but an exemplary one that would display the true way for others, so that "men shall say of succeeding plantacions: the lord make it like that of New England." Exemplary failure would bring exemplary punishment.

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[2] Winthrop Papers, II, 295.

> . . . he hath taken us to be his after a most strict and peculiar manner which will make him the more Jealous of our love and obedience soe he tells the people of Israell, you onely have I knowne of all the families of the Earthe therefore will I punishe you for your Transgressions. [3]

Religious this ideal certainly was, but religion in the seventeenth century did not limit itself to the way to conduct services on Sunday or even the proper moral conduct for the other six days of the week; it embraced the whole of human existence. Winthrop did not restrict "the worke we have in hand" to church polity--"it is by a mutuall consent through a speciall overruleing providence, and a more than an ordinary approbation of the Churches of Christ to seeke out a place of cohabitation and consorteshipp under a due form of Government both civill and ecclesiastical." [4]

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[3] Ibid., II, 293.

[4] Ibid., II, 293.

God prescribed quite as clearly for civil policy as ecclesiastical, and the Puritans intended to follow Him in both.

They could not have picked a better place in which to try it. Distracted by internal conflicts England had to allow the Puritan colonists almost complete autonomy to rule themselves as they pleased for over half a century, while the new land itself placed equally few restrictions on the colonists' plans. New England had a vital influence on Puritan life not because it presented the first settlers with a physical frontier, and certainly not because it was a land of abundance--it was not--but because in a real sense it presented them with nothing. The pattern of settlement that grew out of a situation of plentiful, if poor land and sparse population, the attendant labor shortage, and the distribution of farm land in individual holdings of a much greater average size than in England obviously all had an important effect on social relationships. Yet in the long run America's significance lay not in what it had but what it lacked. The Puritans not only escaped a tyrannous king and meddling bishops in coming to America, they escaped every European institution whatsoever, except such as they chose to resurrect in a form suitable to their purposes. As Englishmen reacting to new circumstances they often used traditional English techniques, but they could not and would not try to transplant English institutions whole: if they had been happy with life in England they never would have left in the first place. In the new world they could build as God had commanded without having to accommodate social theory to any pre-existing social reality: they had brought their reality with them.

But if God had provided His own with an elaborate program and a place to enact it, He had not supplied all the details. The only precedents Puritan theorists could point to in their blueprints for church and state were, by modern standards, mythical: the supposed congregational polity of apostolic days and the theoretical origins of all societies in voluntary covenants among the members somewhere back in primeval times.[5] When they founded their new world on those ideas they operated in effect without a past and the meaning of their present lay hidden in the future--in the form their new institutions would take in the course of time after the conflicts and contributions of many men had hammered out their ultimate implications. Puritan social theory can not be studied without reference to its applications in fact, not because it merely justified some sort of economic or social superstructure, but for precisely the opposite reason, because it gave form and substance to the whole of New England's political, economic and social life and took on added dimension in the process. In establishing practice according to theory, the Puritans gave theory new richness and new meaning when for the first time it ceased to be simply ideal and became actual. Winthrop said more than he intended when he told the _Arbella's_ passengers, "That which the most in theire Churches maineteine as a truthe in profession onely, wee must bring into familiar and constant practise."[6]

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[5] Edmund Morgan has traced the effect of this lack of precedent on one Puritan ecclesiastical idea, the concept of a pure church, in _Visible Saints_ (Ithaca: 1965). The whole of my study is very heavily indebted to the approach laid down in this work.

If the intellectual history of New England will not separate from the social, neither will the social history be intelligible apart from the intellectual. Much as visceral historians may deny it, the average Puritan farmer in front of his average Puritan plow had a mind as well as an intestine. Three times a week, once on Thursdays and twice on Sundays, every week of every year of his allotted three score years and ten he heard his local minister preach the received doctrine. He may not have appreciated all its subtleties, his leaders may even have had to remind him of its main tenets now and then when he grew rebellious, but he heard it, he believed it and once reminded he followed it.

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[6] _Winthrop Papers,_ II, 293.

Historians must not think that the ordinary seventeenth century New Englander could not understand complicated doctrine because they can not; that Puritanism was relevant only to theology and theology irrelevant; that whatever the leaders may have thought, the followers did not think at all. Even ordinary men made some effort to order their lives according to principles laid down by men who were not ordinary at all; they did not just react to their environment with a series of emotional responses semi-conscious at best. When William Ames, professor of theology at Frankeur in the Netherlands, found that puppeteers, magicians and jugglers had no valid callings and wrote as much in his Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof, he gave Samuel Sewall an argument with which to convince Captain John Wing, no theologian but the proprietor of a tavern in Boston's Hudson Street, that he ought not to rent a room "for a Man to show tricks in."[7] Captain Wing was a man of no profound education and his visceral parts presumably worked as well as anyone's in Massachusetts.

Of course not every one lived according to the rules in books of casuistry. If they had, New England would not have needed laws or law courts. In judging the efficacy of the Puritan's social ideas we must not be more naive than they were. They demanded good works but they knew all men were sinful and that some men would commit overt sins; they preached love but they did not deny the reality of hate. Even the regenerate were born anew only in part. Enough of their old nature remained to make authority and coercion

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7. The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 5 Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society (Boston: 1878-1882), V, 196. Hereafter this work will be cited as Sewall Diary and volumes V, VI, VII of the Collections as volumes, I, II, and III, respectively.

necessary in the godliest society. Every Puritan who really believed the basic tenets of his faith expected outright lawbreaking and a good deal of conflict and friction that was ungodly but not specifically illegal. The presence of such things in New England in itself does not prove that Puritanism had no hold over New Englanders. Society's values are defined by its judges not its criminals, and any people that sets its standards at a decent height will fail to meet them completely.

Much will be said in Chapter IV, for example, of the effect of the Puritan ethic on business rationalization, but it would be foolish to deny that many people in New England kept inaccurate books if they kept them at all. James Luxford, Governor Winthrop's incompetent steward, managed to bankrupt his master because as he wrote him, "whereas your wor[ship] saith I had beene as good have done nothinge in matter of accompt, I must be content to doe nothing, for never keeping accompt of Expense, I doe not [know] how to make such an accompt. . . ."[8] Society, however, did not approve of such conduct and attempted to take legal measures against it: it cut Luxford's ears off.

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[8] James Luxford to John Winthrop, ca. July, 1639, Winthrop Papers, IV, 126.

Puritan social values called not just for good bookkeeping, but for subordination, inequality, authority, unity, suppression of the individual will for the good of the whole and any number of other concepts that have a justifiably sinister sound to modern ears. But it is pointless to ignore the grip these ideas had on the mass of society and to point instead to the instances where men flouted them as proof positive that Man seeks freedom and individualism, or at least he does once he receives a few acres of free land in fee simple. The experience of several millenia have shown man's nature to be distressingly malleable whatever the system of land tenure in which he may function. In New England in the seventeenth century a dominant elite did not have to force a constantly insurgent majority into obedience; class distinctions were part of a set of assumptions held in common by all ranks of society. Some men certainly did rebel and railed against authority until it silenced them with stocks or whipping post, just as some men rebel today and rail against the fates on Saturday nights, smashing plate glass windows and barroom furniture until they too meet the same reward as their predecessors (suitably modernized). The vast majority of the population in the seventeenth century, while undoubtedly jealous of their rights as they conceived them, accepted their inferiority, acknowledged their subordinate social status and gave their superiors their proper deference quite as cheerfully and naturally as the latter received it. The meaner sort as well as the better believed in inequality, and the few who refused to accept it did so only in the same sense as we refuse to accept sickness and death.[9]

The real danger to the Puritan social ethic came from within itself and the institutions it created or at least

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[9] Darrett B. Rutman in "The Mirror of Puritan Authority" in George Billias ed. Law and Authority in Colonial America (Barre, Mass.: 1965), pp. 149-167, takes a contrasting approach, arguing the ideals of the leadership were irrelevant to the behavior of the mass of men who took advantage of the physical conditions of the New World to achieve a new freedom unknown in England. Lawrence Towner similarly argues for a kind of inherent human insurgency in the indentured servants of Massachusetts in "'A Fondness for Freedom,' Servant Protest in Puritan Society," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, XIX (1962), 201-219. The basis for my difference of opinion should become plain in the chapters that follow.

permitted to be created. New England society lacked the range of that in England: it had no nobility and few poor cottagers. The church also had been stripped of its hierarchy, its ministers could not hold civil office, its punishments carried no civil disabilities and thanks to a restrictive admissions policy a large segment of the population was not even subject to its discipline. Finally, in a country largely engaged in farming, there were relatively few tenants and no manors or manorial dues to symbolize the landlord's authority.

Puritan doctrine itself tended to contradict its own social ideal. Advocates of political hierarchy would do well to base their franchise on something other than church membership; governors ruling by God's ordinance should not make their offices dependent on popular elections; ministers preaching that every man should remain in his calling should not all call upon every man to increase his estate; above all, anyone maintaining traditional medieval concepts of social relationships should not found them on voluntary contracts. The drama of Puritan society in New England lies in the extent to which the force of ideological commitment alone could maintain a system of political and social subordination for which the material and institutional bases were lacking and which was undermined by many tendencies within the very ideology which supported it.

CHAPTER I

THE BASIS OF INEQUALITY (I): ORDER

I. The Rules of the Universe: Beauty and Efficiency

At the opening of act four of King Lear Glouchester, proscribed, betrayed by one son, tricked into renouncing another, and with both his eyes torn out tells what the first three acts have taught him of man's role in the universe:

> As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
> They kill us for their sport.

William Perkins, fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, considered all stage plays immoral and all stage actors vicious, so he presumably would never have gone to Lear even if he had not died three years before the first performance. Had he heard them, Glouchester's words would only have confirmed his opinions of the theatre: like most other Puritans Perkins lived in a world governed not by chance or malicious fate, but by an omnipotent and all wise divinity who ordered all things for His own good ends, from the course of the greatest stars in the heavens down to the smallest detail of the meanest man's daily life on earth.

> . . . in regard of God there is no chance, neither any event by it; in regard of men indeed who know not the causes of things, many chances may be: but Gods providence, and chance are contrary; he having all things written before him with their causes. . . . nothing comes to passe without the decree of God, no not the wicked actions of men. Which God not onely foreseeth, but decreeth . . . and then even that which is against the will of God cometh not to passe without his will, God willing the being of that which he willeth not to effect; and though he esteeme not evill to be good, yet he accounteth it good that evil should be.[1]

Seventy-three years after Perkins' death another Puritan, a New Englander named William Hubbard, pastor of Ipswich, reiterated that doctrine in a sermon before the Massachusetts General Court and applied it in time honored fashion to social relationships:

> It is not then the result of time or chance, that some are mounted on horse-back, while others are left to travell on foot. That some have with the Centurion, power to command, while others are required to obey. The poor and the rich meet together the Lord is the maker of them both. The Almighty hath appointed her that sits behind the mill, as well as him that ruleth on the throne.[2]

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[1] An Exposition of the Epistle of Jude in Works (London: 1631), III, 516. I unfortunately used a mixed set: Volume I was printed in Cambridge in 1608.

[2] The Happiness of a People in the Wisdome of their Rulers Directing and in the Obedience of their Brethren Attending Unto what Israel ought to do (Boston: 1676), p. 9.

God had not given men varied attributes and talents without having a benevolent purpose behind this variety, a sort of cosmic division of labor in which each man had his own peculiar function suited to his particular talents, everyone contributing to the good of all in his appointed way. The doctrine was at least as old as civilization, but the assembled freemen, deputies and magistrates took a special comfort in hearing it anew each year at election time, especially when the preacher was as eloquent as Hubbard:

> . . . herein hath he as well consulted the good of humane nature, as the glory of his own wisdome and power: Those of the superior rank, but making a supply of what is wanting in the other: otherwise might not the foolish and the ignorant be like to loose themselves in the Wilderness, if others were not as eyes to them. The fearful and the weak might be distroyed, if others more strong and valiant, did not protect and defend them. The poor and the needy might starve with hunger and cold, were they not fed with the morsells, and warmed with the fleece of the wealthy. Is it not found by experience, that the greatest part of mankind, are but as tools and Instruments for others to work by, rather than any proper Agents to effect any thing of themselves [?] [3]

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[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

The modern reader curious enough to look through sermons three centuries old may wonder why God did not simply endow all men with all virtues, instead of only one or two for each, but the Puritans thought they knew the reason. Aside from pointing out that He had made men different, and whatever He did was good by definition, they invoked (as had civilized men for centuries) what Arthur Lovejoy called the principle of plentitude: the concept that God most increased His glory and created most beautifully when he created in infinite variety.[4] John Winthrop reminded the prospective settlers while they were still on the *Arbella* in 1630 that "God almightie in his most holy and wise providence hath soe disposed of the Condicion of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich some poore, some highe and eminent in power and dignitie; others meane and in subjeccion" among other reasons in order "to hold conformity with the rest of his workes, being delighted to shew forthe the glory of his wisdome in the variety and differance of the Creatures and the glory of his power, in ordering all these differences for the preservacion and good

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[4] Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (New York: 1960), pp. 50-55 and passim. All studies that involve the concept that gives Lovejoy's book its title customarily state that they have depended very heavily on his work. This one is no exception. For the political implications of the great chain in Elizabethan times see E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture (New York: 1944), pp. 82-84, 87-91. A recent study concerned with English Puritanism prior to the Civil War claims that its radical insistence on an absolute standard by which to judge all things and its emphasis on the immediacy of all believers to God destroyed the traditional concept of the Great Chain, replacing it with a more egalitarian philosophy. Michael Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints (Cambridge, Mass.: 1965), pp. 151-171. This, it seems to me, is to overstate a good case. If this study does nothing else it ought to indicate the prodigious number of paradoxes, ambivalences and outright contradictions contained in Puritan theory, or rather at war with each other within

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it. One such set of antagonistic concepts was the Great Chain, which Puritan writers did invoke, and ideas directly contrary to it, but the battle between them did not automatically come out in favor of the latter: much had to happen to Puritanism and the Puritans in the New World and the Old before the issue was decided. Cotton Mather saw nothing odd in invoking the Great Chain as a cosmological commonplace as late as 1721, combining it rather inappropriately with the image of the world machine in which God was the chief engineer. *The Christian Philosopher* (London, 1721), pp. 222, 224, 292-293. *Cf*. *infra* Chapter III, pp. 214-217. Lovejoy certainly demonstrated that the idea of the Great Chain could exist within the most varied ideological systems.

of the whole and the glory of his greatness . . . counting himselfe more honoured in dispenceing his guifts to man by man, then if he did it by his own immediate hand."[5]

Cosmology joined social theory in defense of rank. Charles Morton wrote in the basic science text used at Harvard from 1687 to 1727 that the world had "Perfection, both of parts and vertues." He meant that it already had the maximum possible number of species and each had a suitable virtue assigned to it:

> so that tho we may fancy greater perfections, (as that man should fly as birds dive as fishes, be Invisible as the Angels etc:) yet in reality these would not be mans perfections because the Infinitley Wise God has ordered for Every Thing what is best; his will and wisdom being the measure of all perfection.
>
> The World of parts perfection is Possest.
> and Every part of Vertues which are best.[6]

God, as Hubbard knew, "is the God of peace, of order, and not of confusion." Having made all those various species God arranged them in an order where each fulfilled its assigned function most effectively for the benefit of the whole. The stars followed fixed courses, the angels stood in serried ranks, the very birds of the air followed a due pattern of deference. As the principle of order ruled the cosmos, so men should regulate their society, "For Order is the soul of the universe, the life and health of things natural the beauty of things Artificial." Borrowing from the "Schools" Hubbard defined order as "such a disposition of things in themselves equall and unequal, as gives to every one their due and proper place." Those to whom God had given the talent to govern should become the governors, the rest should each serve in that place best suited to them.[7]

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[5] The Model of Christian Charity, Winthrop Papers, II, 282.

[6] Compendium Physicae, Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts (Boston: 1940), XXXIII, 210.

The well ordered commonwealth would not restrict itself to seeing that the man equipped to govern did so --it would also make sure that the man fitted to be a shoemaker became one, and that in his role as a subject he obeyed the rulers and did not interfere with any other man's specialty for which he had no capacity. The Puritans like many others before and after them envisioned a society of specialists bound together by mutual need. Each must stick to his specialty, and any other arrangement would inevitably lead to chaos. Daniel Dennison, himself called to be a ruler, put it graphically:

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[7] The Happiness of a People, p. 8. Cf. Thomas Hooker's definition of order: "The word taken in its native and narrow signification, implies the right posture of things in their proper places and ranks, when they are marshalled by the rule of Method, according to their especiall precedencies and dependencies they have, each upon other." A Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline (London: 1648), p. 2.

> we must not pervert the order of God and nature, why should I expect my fellow-traveller should direct my way better than my guid[e]? why then do I employ him? that my comrade should give a command more advantageous than my captain, that a sheep . . . should lead the flock into better Pasture than the shepherd; that my Brother should have a greater care for me than my Father[?] [8]

The concept of order served equally well to defend all sorts of servile relationships between masters and servants, and even, when the need arose, the existence of human slavery itself. Answering Samuel Sewall's spirited attack on slavery, The Sale of Joseph, in 1700, John Saffin had only to reiterate the traditional theories and accuse

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[8] Irenicon or a Salve for New-England's Sore, printed with William Hubbard, The Benefit of a Well-Ordered Conversation (Boston: 1684), p. 216.

Sewall of attempting "to prove that all men have equal right to Liberty, and all outward comforts of this life,"

> which Position seems to invert the Order that God hath set in the World, who hath Ordained different degrees and orders of men, some to be High and Honourable, some to be Low and Despicable, some to be Monarchs, Kings, Princes and Governours, Masters and Commanders, others to be subjects, and to be commanded; servants of sundry sorts and degrees, bound to obey; yea, some born to be slaves, and so to remain during their lives, as hath been proved. Otherwise there would be a meer parity among men. . . . [9]

Harsh as the argument now seems, it did not simply defend the privileges of those fortunate enough to have privileges to defend. It was, instead, a plan for maximizing social welfare by insuring that each man performed that function in which he best served the good of all men, not just the good of the upper classes or the dictates of his own unstable whims. *Salus populi* depended on subjection and subordination: if any man might follow his individual desires then every man would ultimately suffer for it.

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[9] John Saffin, *A Brief and Candid Answer to a late Printed Sheet Entitled The Selling of Joseph* (Boston: 1700), reprinted in part in George H. Moore, *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts* (New York: 1866), pp. 251-2.

Thomas Hooker developed the point with what to the Puritans must have seemed irresistible logic.

> For if each man may do what is good in his owne eyes, proceed according to his own pleasure, so that none may crosse him or controll him by any power; there must of necessity follow the distraction and desolation of the whole, when each man hath liberty to follow his owne imagination and humorous devices and seek his particular, but oppose one another, and all prejudice the publike good.
>
> In the building, if the parts be neither mortified nor braced, as there will be little beauty so there can be no strength. It[']s so in setting up the frames of societies among men, when their mindes and hearts are not mortified by mutuall consent of subjection one to another, there is no expectation of any successefull proceeding with the advantage of the publike. . . .
>
> Mutuall subjection is as it were the sinewes of society, by which it is sustained and supported.
>
> . . .
>
> Hence every part is subject too the whole, and must be serviceable to the good there of, and must be ordered by the power thereof.
>
> Salus Populi suprema lex,
> It is the highest law in all Policy Civill or Spirituall to preserve the good of the whole; at this all must ame, and unto this all must be subordinate.[10]

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[10] A Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline, p. 188.

The doctrine weighed no more easily on those it made members of the upper ranks than on those it consigned to the lower. Service stood as the end of all men, the only difference between them arising out of the manner in which they served. Those who had great gifts, be they of government, of preaching, or even of wealth, lay under an inescapable injunction to use them for the public welfare and not just for their own advancement or pleasure. "We ought Every One of us to Serve our Generation, before we fall asleep, or it will be but an uncomfortable Sleep that we shall fall into. We are, in Publico Discrimine, and that man is a Wen or a Scab, rather than a Member of this Body Politic, who shall decline the service of his countrey."[11]

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[11] Cotton Mather, The Serviceable Man (Boston: 1690), p. 55. The doctrine obviously could be used to attack the traditional system of inherited social relationships by claiming that the community ought to see that men received their proper stations in proportion to their merits and not through inherited advantages in wealth or family status. However, apologists for the going state of things could reply, as Ebenezar Pemberton, pastor of the Old South Church in Boston did, that God provided not only a man's talents but his opportunity to use them: "There is also a great difference in the opportunity that men have to exercise those gifts that are commited to them. This is in a great measure according to that order, degree post and station divine providence has placed them in." Pemberton

A Puritan gentleman had always to convince himself that his current mode of life allowed him to employ his talents and estate in the most serviceable way. He could not like the Anglican Nicholas Ferrar conclude that a public career corrupted him who pursued it and retire to Little Gidding for a life of prayer, fasting and bookbinding. That was not only to flee temptation instead of overcoming it, but worse yet to fail the Lord's trust by not employing the talents He had given for use as His Steward, and no Puritan wanted to stand accused of that crime on that awful day when he rendered up his final account.

Before moving to New England John Winthrop had to convince himself that the most useful field for his talents

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cautioned that "We must not without God's call quit our post, thrust ourselves into anothers providence, with a conceit that there we may best serve, and promote the good of the world. But herein observe the will of God by keeping to the service that belongs to our station, which providence has made our peculiar business." A True Servant of his Generation Characterized in Sermons and Discourses on Several Occasions (London: 1727), pp. 215, 220-21. Like most things Puritan, the idea of a social division of labor had ambiguous potentials.

lay there and not at home in England. Robert Ryece warned him that "The church and common welthe heere at home, hath more neede of your best abylytie in these tymes, than any remote plantation, which may be preformed by persons of lesser worthe and apprehension," to which Winthrop replied that his current financial difficulties would curtail his usefulness in England in any case, "and if I should let passe this opportunitye, that talent which God hath bestowed on me for publike service, were like to be buried."[12]

Once established in New England Winthrop and his associates showed little sympathy for anyone who did not manifest the same desire for public service as themselves. The Massachusetts General Court considered fining men qualified to become freemen (men entitled to vote and hold office) who failed to, declaring "the countrye wanteth the use of their gifts in public service, and others are thereby the more burdened."[13] Most men of "parts," however, were as willing as Winthrop to assume public duties appropriate to their stations and the colony benefited from it--so much so that the government thought the fact of "ships safely arrived with persons of spetiall use and quality" in 1633 sufficient grounds to declare a day of thanksgiving.[14]

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[12] Robert Ryece to John Winthrop, 12 August 1629, Winthrop Papers, II, 105-6. "General Observations for the Plantation of New England," ibid., II, 126.

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[13] Winthrop Papers, V, 190. The actual law the General Court passed to cover the situation was much milder than Winthrop's draft: instead of suffering a fine of 10s. for every six months they deferred taking the freemen's oath, church members would only suffer a maximum fine of 20s. if they refused town office on the grounds that they were not freemen. Mass. Rec., II, 208. Declining public office might even subject a man to ecclesiastical discipline: when Richard Morris, ensign to Captain Underhill, received permission from the magistrates to resign his post in 1633/34 "he gave offense to the congregation of Boston, so as being questioned and convinced of sin in forsaking his calling, he did acknowledge his fault" and was promptly elected lieutenant of his militia company, "for he was a very stout man and an experienced officer." John Winthrop, The History of New England from 1630 to 1649 (ed. James Savage; Boston: 1853), I, 152. Hereafter cited as Winthrop Jl.

[14] Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, ed., Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England (Boston: 1853-54), I, 109.

As the upper ranks had obligations, so the lower ones had rights. In return for respecting their superiors and paying them the deference due their special qualities, inferiors deserved to be treated with respect themselves and not with contempt or haughtiness.[15] While no Puritan wanted to encourage too much familiarity between the various social orders for fear of undermining discipline, no one approved of pride or an overbearing carriage even in men in the highest positions of power. Royal Governor Joseph Dudley's curt order to two young farmers one day in 1707 to get out of the road on which he was travelling and his subsequent attack on them with his sword when they did not heed him shocked his eminently respectable and conservative Council. When Dudley charged the two with contempt of authority the Massachusetts Superior Court summarily dismissed the case.[16] The man who used high rank to abuse those beneath him forgot the reason God had raised him up in the world: to serve all men for His glory.

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[15] Superiors, William Perkins insisted, must honor their inferiors as well as the other way around: "And the honour due unto them is without all contempt, in meekness of spirit, to respect them as brethren . . . true it is, that all superiors ought to keepe their state and place; Yet so, as they have respect as to such as are inferior to them, without scorne or contempt." Cases of Conscience in Works, II, 152.

II: Sin and the Need for Regulation

Mutuality, subordination and public service constituted a kind of sacred trinity of all respectable societies, Puritan or otherwise. Any other kind of arrangement would have impressed the seventeenth century as downright unnatural. Henry Peacham, the author of The Compleat Gentleman, was no Puritan but he struck a note common to all educated men when he insisted that human society must follow the same divinely ordained pattern of hierarchy found in nature.

> Can we be curious in descerning a counterfeit from the true Pearle; to choose our siens [scions] of the best fruit, buy our Flowers at twenty pounds the foote or slip: and not regard or make difference of linage, nor bee carefull into what Stocke we match our selves, or of what parents we chose a servant?

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[16] Sewall Diary, II, 144-46, 144n.-147n., 148, 152, 158.

> Surely, to beleeve that Nature (rather the God of Nature) produceth not the same among our selves, is to question the rarest worke-mistris of ignorance or partiality, and to abase ourselves beneath the Beast.[17]

A century and a half later, in 1776, other men would appeal to Nature's God to justify their claims for the equality of all men and of Americans and Englishmen in particular, but this only indicates the intellectual distance travelled in America in that time. Every Puritan theorist could feel the anarchist Anabaptists of Münster breathing down his neck even after two centuries and hear their diabolical argument that since government came about as a device to control man's sinful nature, in taking away sin Christ had taken away government too. The Puritan had to reclaim that God created men unequal, that there had been superiors and inferiors before the Fall and that the divine will would naturally rank men in an orderly hierarchy even if they had remained innocent. Government would not in that case have been needed to restrain men's lusts, "Yett it might tend to the ornament of the universe, and be a trial of our obedience to this Precept [the fifth commandment]: And we have good footing in the Word of God, that God hath placed an order between the very Angels of Light."[18]

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[17] The Compleat Gentleman (ed. G.S. Gordon; Oxford: 1906), pp. 1-2. This is a reprint of the edition of 1634.

Whatever might have been, Eve had given Adam that apple and ever since men needed order not only for beauty and efficiency but as a positive check on the limitless atrocities sin might prompt them to at any time. On no other subject did the Puritan minister wax as eloquent as on sin: its true depiction called for all the ingenuity of the literary art. Wrote Thomas Hooker:

> It crosseth the whol course of Providence, perverts the work of the Creature and defaceth the beautiful frame, and that sweet correspondence and orderly usefulness the Lord first implanted

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18. Samuel Willard, A Compleat Body of Divinity (Boston: 1726), p. 619 (2nd pag.). Cf. William Perkins, Exposition on Jude, Works, III, 536-37; Ebenezar Pemberton, A Christian fixed in his Post in Sermons and Discourses on Various Occasions, p. 39, and The Divine Original of Government Asserted (Boston: 1710), pp. 15-16. In the first of these two sermons Pemberton wrote that "It is highly probable had man retained his first state of unblemisht integrity, there would yet have been different degrees of men" and deduced from that, that "it is no presumption to assert that Levelism is contrary to nature, and the intention of the God of Nature." The God of Nature went through some startling changes in a few short years.

> in the order of things; the Heavens deny their influence, the Earth her strength, the Corn her nourishment, thank sin for that. . . . This makes crooked servants in a family no man can rule them, crooked inhabitants in towns, crooked members in congregations, ther's no ordering nor joynting of them in that comly accord and mutual subjection. . . . Man was the mean betwixt God and the creature to convey all good with all the constancy of it, and therefore when Man breaks, Heaven and Earth break all asunder, the conduit being cracked and displaced there can be no conveyance from the Fountain.[19]

While sin had not overthrown divine order, in warping men's affections and clouding their reasons it had crippled their ability to conform to it. In Puritan cosmology man had occupied a central place in the universe before the fall, using all the "creatures" for the glory of God and his own comfort. Within society he stood ranked in an ascending order, but one he submitted to gladly and willingly. Sin had destroyed all that: man now valued the creatures for themselves, not realizing in his fall-induced stupidity that they were empty and useless without Him who made them, and in his sinful state he would not obey authority without the threat of coercion.[20]

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[19] The Application of Redemption (London: 1657), p. 59.

No one had carved "There but for the grace of God go I" on any New England gallows or public stocks, but every Puritan must have thought it whenever he passed one, not in order to invoke compassion for the criminal but to discourage trust in himself. Left to his own devices man would run amuck--at least Puritans would in their own view.[21] Grace restored some of the primitive integrity of the human reason and will, but regeneration would always remain imperfect this side of Jordan: "The best of the Saints have flesh as well as Spirit, they have something of the Old Man, as well as of the New; they know but in part and are Sanctified but in part; and hence many weaknesses in managing the cause of God."[22]

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[20] On man's role in the universe before the fall see Urian Oakes, A Seasonable Discourse Wherein Sincerity & Delight in the Service of God is earnestly pressed upon Professors of Religion (Cambridge, Mass.: 1682), p. 27.

[21] On the eve of the execution of three criminals in Boston in 1681, Cotton Mather wrote in his diary: "It was the holy [William] Bradford's Custome when hee heard of any atrocious Iniquity perpetrated, hee would lay his Hand on his Breast, and Say, There is that in this Heart of mine, which would make mee as vile as the Vilest, if Sovereign Grace did not prevent it. Alas, I have the seed of all corruption in mee. My Heart naturally departs from God; it is not any vertue of my own, that keeps mee from the most enormous villainies." The Diary of Cotton Mather, 7 Coll. MHS VII, 30. Volumes VII and VIII of the Seventh Series of the Collections will be cited hereafter as Mather Diary, I and II, respectively.

Perfection of the works of the regenerate, like celibacy and the holy nature of poverty and solitude they considered Popish conceits. The existence of crime in itself did not alarm or dishearten the Puritan; more than any other man he was no perfectionist. In his old age Judge Samuel Sewall with air of delivering the most elementary of commonplaces began his charge to the Suffolk County grand jury "Since men's departure from Gode, there was such an aversion in them to return, that every kind of Authority was necessary to reclaim them."[23]

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[22] John Higginson, *The Cause of God and his People in New England* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1663), p. 6. *Cf*. John Cotton: "Perfection of righteousness, so as to do good without sin, is not to be found in any man; no, not in the best upon the earth . . . in many things (and in some things more than others) all men, even the best man, do sin . . . in all things, in our best actions, we sin something." *A Brief Exposition on Ecclesiastes* (Edinburgh: 1868), p. 74. The date of composition of this work is uncertain; it was printed in England in 1654, two years after Cotton's death.

The key phrase was "every kind of authority." Puritan speculations on the necessity of government seem only innocent if obvious refutations of anarchism until it becomes clear that by "government" they meant "subordination" and that they did not restrict the concept simply to the political state. Every kind of relationship, of magistrate and subject, master and servant, minister and people, consisted of inferior and superior, and in each the superior made the decisions and the inferior obeyed. In a real sense authority was not only necessary to preserve the divine order, it was identical to it:

> Take away this order, and how shall peace, or the society continue? This truth of a ministerial Judge, is reckoned among the Fundamentals . . . if it be in matters of Religion, there is the Priest; if in matter civil, there is the Magistrate, and he that stands not, or submits not to the sentence of these, let him be cast out from Israel: so requisite a thing is order.

John Norton, the man who wrote that, was referring to the New England laity's refusal to accept the ministers position on infant baptism formulated as the Half-Way Covenant in 1662, but he would never have denied that his statements applied to civil affairs as well. He reminded his readers that whatever their opinions they must follow the dictates of authority, which while it might not be the "Truth Positive" was nevertheless that which "The God of Truth hath made . . . for to keep societies in peace; and were it not for this Institution, there could be no sitting in Judgement, or any Polity among men." Authority might make a mistake, but "better an innocent and a good man suffer, then order, for that preserves the whole."[24]

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[23] Sewall Diary, III, 379.

Norton founded his remarks on the Puritan's basic distrust of man's capacity to rule himself since the fall: "Where there is liberty and the Old man, there must needs be much controversie." Men must submit their lives to the ordering of recognized specialists, be it in church or state, he argued in doing battle with that principle supposedly most basic to Protestantism, the sacred right of the individual conscience to judge truth for itself. In an earlier time and another place the Tudor Puritan Peter Wentworth had rejected the claim of Elizabeth's bishops to determine religious dogma with the stirring cry "Make you popes who list . . . for we will make you none" and went to the Tower for it. That, however, occurred in an England not controlled by Puritans, and in any case bishops and popes had usurped their authority. Rulers of church and state in New England, duly constituted in a lawful manner, could determine the truth and enforce it whenever the "Old Man" prompted some of the ruled to resist. Whether it be towards magistrates, ministers, masters or even parents disrespect for authority of the Wentworth variety met just as fast and severe a punishment in New England as in old.[25]

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[24] John Norton, Sion the out-cast healed of her Wounds (Cambridge, Mass.: 1664), pp. 8-10.

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[25] Instances of punishment for contempt of government, magistrates, the clergy, masters, and parents occur very frequently in the Massachusetts General and county court records throughout the whole of the seventeenth centuries. See, for example, the Mass. Rec. I, 84, 86, 97, 114, 133, 177, 220, 222, 234, 315; II, 36, 37, 42. Cf. Winthrop Jl., I, 9, 67-8, 73. The seditious of all classes felt the might of the state: in 1646 the court of assistants fined the Rev. Peter Hobart £ 20 when "the jury found that he seemed to be ill affected to this government, and that his speeches tended to sedition and contempt of authority." Winthrop Jl., II, 313. The county courts took over the

Not only should a few make the decisions for all, but the agenda they must decide on was much broader than in contemporary society. *Salus populi* then as now remained the end of government, but the Puritans conceived of public welfare as something entirely apart from the welfare of each of the individuals who collectively composed the public. Rather the term indicated a positive pattern of virtue determined by God's unalterable and eternal law and ratified

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main burden of the prosecution of such offenders in the latter part of the century, and their records abound with cases. For particular cases consult the indexes of the published editions of the files of the Essex and Suffolk County Courts under the heading "Crimes" and a variety of sub-headings including "Contempt," "Slander," "Abuse," and "Speaking against Magistrates." *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County Massachusetts* (ed. George F. Dow; Salem: 1911-21); *Records of the Suffolk County Court, 1671-1680, Publ. CSM* (Boston: 1933), XXIX-XXX. See also the cases of Francis Stepney and Charles Lammons in Suffolk County in 1685 and 1691, respectively, and of Peter Bussaker in Connecticut in 1648. Historical Records Survey, *Abstract and Index of the Records of the Inferiour Court of Pleas (Suffolk County Court) Held at Boston 1680-1698* (Boston: 1940), pp. 131, 135; *Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663*, *Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society*, XXII (1928), 54-55.

by a covenant between God and society. If society failed in its obligations, if it let any kind of external sin flourish anywhere without taking action against it, it failed in its covenant and should make ready to suffer the divine wrath.

By consequence the reach of the Puritan state was tremendous. New England's governments passed regulations covering some of the most intimate and personal details of their subjects' lives: laws requiring men to be industrious, laws supervising the disciplining of their children, laws forbidding them to live beyond their means, and even laws controlling the amount of lace and gold braid they could wear.[26] Displaying a passion for the elimination of "masterless men" that did credit to their Tudor heritage, the leaders of New England even attempted to place all single men

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[26] Passing a law and enforcing it are naturally two different things, especially in an area with as dispersed a population and as primitive communications facilities as New England. Some statutes, such as those dealing with contempt of authority, were enforced constantly, some, like the sumptuary regulations, only very sporadically, and still others, like the price and wage regulations, rarely if at all, particularly in the latter part of the seventeenth century. In general, though occasionally revived with new ferocity, the legal regulation of the inhabitants' personal lives seems to have grown less in the second half of the century. Yet a partial list of the criminal charges heard by the Essex County Court in the years 1680-83 gives some approximation of the extent to which statute still governed

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the people's lives and also indicates both the good and the bad in this kind of regulation: Absence from public ordinances, abuse on board ship, abusing a servant, abusing another, abusing her husband, abusing his wife, abusive carriages, abusive speeches to authority, accusing a minister of theft, base words against the minister, bastardry, breach of the Sabbath, contempt of authority, cruelty to animals, defaming authority, disorderly company keeping, drunkenness, entertaining servants, folding and frizzling hair, fornication, kissing another's wife, lascivious conduct, living away from wife, lying, neglect (of a town) to provide schoolmaster, neglecting family, night walking, posting books on the Sabbath, reproaching ministers, parents and relations, running away from master, sailing out of a harbor on the Lord's day, smoking tobacco, speaking against authority, against the government, the magistrates, the elders, and the form of worship, speaking reproachfully, swearing, traveling on the Sabbath, uncivil carriage, wearing silk scarfs, and witchcraft. Not all these charges resulted in convictions, but they do suggest the large number of things then considered subject to legal restriction. *Essex County Court Records*, VIII, *passim*. For particular instances consult the index under "Crimes" and the list given above. As late as the 1730's a large proportion of the cases heard before the Worcester County Court involved charges of profane swearing, working or traveling on the Sabbath, failing to attend public worship or fornication before marriage. The last charge referred to married couples who had cohabited together before the actual marriage ceremony, a circumstance often arising out of the formal and binding character of betrothals. *Records of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace For the County of Worcester, Massachusetts, From 1731 to 1737*, *Collections of the Worcester Society of Antiquity*, V (1883), No. 10, *passim*.

under family supervision and then to regulate all families.[27] As late as 1682 the Massachusetts General Court ordered

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[27] As early as 21 April 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company, then still located in London, ordered John Endecott, governor of their Salem plantation, to group his colonists into families and to make sure each group was well ordered and conducted religious services, in order that "disorders may bee prevented, and ill weeds nipt before they take too great a head." Mass. Rec., I, 397. In 1736, after the main body of settlers arrived, the General Court ordered the towns to "take care to order & dispose of all single persons and inmates with their towne to servise, or otherwise," and Connecticut and Plymouth passed specific statutes against single men living alone without official permission. Massachusetts adopted a nearly identical law under the new charter in 1703. Mass. Rec., I, 186; Nathaniel B. Shurtleff et al., ed., Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England (Boston: 1855-61), XI, 223; J.H. Trumbull and C.J. Hoadly, eds., Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut (Hartford: 1850-90), 1, 8; Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay (Boston: 1869-1922), I, 538.

The Massachusetts towns seemed to have done as they were ordered. Cambridge, for example, ordered three young single men to submit to family government in 1665, Dorchester placed its single men and a single woman with families in 1669 and 1670 and inspected family government in 1671 and 1675, Dedham settled its young men with families in 1677, and Watertown did the same with one Benjamin Pierce in 1701. The Records of the Town of Cambridge (Cambridge, Mass.: 1901), 160, 161; Boston Registry Department, Records Relating to the Early History of Boston (Boston: 1876-1909), IV, 158-160, 168, 181-82, 208; Don Gleason Hill, ed., The Early Records of the Town of Dedham (Dedham: 1886-1899), V, 53; Watertown Records (Watertown: 1894), II, 134.

The Massachusetts county courts also took steps themselves to regulate families and to insure that all single each town's "tythingmen" (the seventeenth century version of block wardens) to report to the selectmen for legal

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men belonged to a family. In June, 1669, upon finding Joshua Turland of Braintree an "idle and extravant person, [who] runs up and down, neglects his business and is in danger of falling into mischief," the Essex County Court ordered the selectmen of his town to put him out to service. Again, in October, 1672, the same court ordered John Littleale of Haverhill, living alone "whereby he is subject to much sin and iniquity which ordinarily are the companions and consequences of a solitary life" to settle himself in an orderly family in the town within six weeks. Thomas Hensahaw and Thomas Hull, both of Woburn, received the same treatment from the Middlesex County Court. Essex County Court Records, IV, 160; V, 104. Middlesex County Court Records, Ms. transcript in the office of the clerk of court, Middlesex County Court House, Cambridge, Mass., III, 24.

The county courts oversaw the towns' regulations of families, occasionally taking action when the selectmen were remiss in their duties. In 1679, for example, the Essex County Court presented the towns of Salem, Beverly and Manchester for not inspecting all their families to see if all children had been brought up to read and practice a lawful calling. The court did not dismiss the presentment until the towns gave it written accounts of their efforts to comply with the laws. Essex County Court Rec., V, 378. As in the case of placing single men, the courts also sometimes bypassed the town selectmen and regulated family order directly. The Suffolk County Court in the course of the ten year period 1671-80 punished one girl for abuse of her mother, sent a quarrelsome husband and wife to the house of correction, and tried a father for having a disorderly family. The next decade saw very little such regulation by the Court, but in 1692 it admonished one Ebenezer Thayer of Boston for abusive carriage towards his father. Suffolk County Court Records, I, 302, 411; II, 940. Inferiour Court of Pleas, p. 137. For other instances of regulation by this court action all persons who neglected their callings or who "mispend their Time and that little which they earn, to the Impoverishing, if not utter undoing of themselves and Families."[28] If the authorities deemed a family improperly ordered they could (and sometimes did) break it up and disperse its members among households more in line with official standards.[29]

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see the Index to the former volume under "Husband and Wife."

Both Suffolk and Essex County Courts passed numerous orders for couples living apart to reunite, for specific cases of which see the indexes of their printed records under "Living Away from Wife (or Husband)" and "Husband and Wife, Living Apart," respectively. The state supervision of family life and the role of the family in maintaining social order are discussed in Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Family (Boston: 1956), 78-89.

[28] Mass. Rec., V, 373. The tythingmen were established by the General Court in 1677 to see that tavern keepers obeyed the laws regulating their profession and also that their patrons did not spend too much time drinking to the neglect of their families and professions. The office lapsed during the Dominion of New England period, but the General Court revived it and gave it new powers in 1693 and after. Mass. Rec. V, 240-41; Acts and Resolves, I, 59, 60, 155, 329, 679.

[29] The Suffolk County Court ordered Captain James Johnson, "complained of for disorderly carriages in his Family" to wind up his household and to "dispose of himself" and his family "into some good orderly Family within the Fortnight" in 1675. Thomas Russel's family was similarly

Even the calling, the particular means of livelihood God called men to, functioned not only as the means by which they supported themselves and served the common good, but also as a limit on the area within which their corrupt natures might work. According to Richard Sibbes, "The calling of Christianity is shewed in particular callings, which are sanctified by God to subdue the excess of corruptions. Men without callings are exceedingly vicious, as some gentlemen and beggars."[30] As Sibbes wrote, the Massachusetts

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treated by the Essex County Court in 1682, and since Russel "carried himself very profusely and extravagantly in running up and down the country, taking no cares to provide for his family," the Court ordered his estate sequestered and appointed "feoffes" to administer it for the benefit of his family. Nathaniel Hadlock had been guilty of the same extravagance in 1674, and the Court had applied a similar, though milder remedy, sequestering only his wife's estate to make sure he did not spend it. Suffolk County Court Rec., I, 647; Essex County Court Rec., V, 356; VIII, 344. This kind of action was reserved for extraordinary cases, and official regulation was obviously never completely successful, but it was put into practice often enough to be more than a sporadic annoyance. The selectment of the various towns repeatedly subjected the families of the poor in particular to inspection and broke them up when they found them unsatisfactory. *Cf*. *infra*, Chapter V, pp. 282-84.

[30] *Lydia's Conversion in Works* (Edinburgh: 1862), VI, 521. The sermon from which the quotation comes first appeared in London in 1638.

Bay Company directed, ordering John Endecott, their governor at the Salem outpost, a year before the main body of settlers even arrived, to make sure "that all bee kept to labour, as the only meanes to reduce them to civill, yea, a godly life, and to keepe youth from falling into many enormities which by nature wee are all too much enclyned unto."[31]

Conceiving of order as limitation, Puritans constantly used military analogies in writing of social organization. Each man was in daily individual battle with sin, and all men collectively with Anti-Christ; to change one's calling in this Christian Warfare (as John Downame called it) broke the discipline and formation necessary for the struggle. "As in the Campe every man hath his place appointed him, and his proper colours under which he is to keepe him; so all Christian Soldiers have their stations, that is, their vocations whereunto they are called of God, within the limits whereof they are to containe themselves."[32]

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[31] *Mass. Rec.*, I, 397.

[32] John Downame, *The Christian Warfare* (London: 1634), 20. *Cf*. William Perkins, *A Treatise of Callings* in *Works*, I, 727.

Having put men in their appropriate places, the Puritans tried to insure that they and every one else knew what these were. A properly ordered society, according to Samuel Willard, would "take care, that all orders of Men have their due Honour and respect paid to them" and that "due Distances be maintained between Superior and Inferiors."[33] The magistrate in particular, if he was to impress his subjects with his authority must in his bearing and costume assume some semblance of the majesty and dignity of the divinity whose vicegerant on earth he was. In 1583 while Philip Stubbes was anatomizing England's abuses--his list came to one hundred and twenty pages--he took time out to note that

> Familiaritie, or coequalitie doth ever bring contempt. And therefore take awaye authoritie and honor from the magistrates either temporall or spirituall, and over throwe the same altogither. If authoritie should not be dignified, as well

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[33] *A Compleat Body of Divinity,* pp. 623-4. *Cf.* the Introduction to Daniel Dennison's *Irenicon:* ". . . emulation about wisdom, wealth and holiness have put the whole Earth into combusion. This is the root of bitterness to all other evils of self-love, malice and envy, of all which covetousness is an inseparable companion: and is either chief in the first enterprize, or over-rules in carrying all wayes of commotion." Contained in the *Benefit of a Well-Ordered Conversation*, n.p.

> with glorie and eternall pompe the better to score the same, & to shew forth the majestie thereof, would it not soone grow to be dispised, vilipended, and naught set by? [34]

During the next one hundred and fifty years Puritan writers would reiterate that point and New England magistrates would act upon it.[35] In January, 1635/6 the Massachusetts magistrates, conscious that their internal feuding had weakened their standing with the people, agreed to act with more unity in the future "that their vote in public might bear (as the voice of God)," and to "appear more solemnly in public, with attendance, apparel, and open notice of their entrance into the court."[36]

Social order involved more than these stage tricks to maintain the prestige of public officials. Men with socially useful endowments, men of talent and virtue, deserved in the orthodox view not merely political power but also wealth and social status in proportion to the extent to which they contributed to the public good. The Aristotelian conception of "distributive justice," that the whole should distribute its benefits to its parts in proportion to their worth,[37] gave a classical facade to a basically medieval conception of society as an interlocking series of political, social and economic hierarchies in which rank in one implied the equivalent rank in the others. There was an objective ranking of vocations; and men in the lower ranks, though they might move into the upper, should not ape the prerogatives of the latter until they had done so. Society must not only reward the superior, but make sure that the inferior did not receive as great a reward.

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[34] F. J. Furnivall, ed., The Anatomy of Abuses (London: 1882), II, 102-3.

[35] Cf. infra, Chapter III, pp. 130-31.

[36] Winthrop Jl., I, 214.

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[37] William Ames' account of distributive justice in his The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, the single most basic statement of the whole of Puritan theology, differs little if at all from similar sections in Aquinas Summa or from the Nichomachean Ethics for that matter, except that he adds the Fifth Commandment to the authority of Aristotle. Ames, Works (London: 1643), pp. 308-10. The Marrow is paged separately from the rest of the book. Cf. Ames' Conscience with the Power and Cases thereof in ibid., pp. 112-113 (3rd pag.).

> Whatever the pride of any mean persons may prompt them to think, whatever is not according to order, is very indecent; sc. [to wit] for the peasant to equal the prince, or imitate him in garbe or in gate, or for the handmaid to emmulate her mistriss. Will not this occasion the base to behave themselves proudly against the Honourable, a forerunner of sad confusion breaking in upon a degenerating people. [38]

In England the great hall mark of the aristocracy had been and would remain until the mid-nineteenth century the hunting laws. Certain circles in Suffolk considered dilatory enforcement of these laws as much a sign of declining times in its way as the rise of Arminianism. A list of twenty-three "Common Grevances," mainly of Puritan origin, drawn up for presentation to the Parliament of 1624 complained not only of plural benefice holding, the silencing of godly and learned preachers, lax enforcement of the penal laws against Catholics and a scandalous and dumb ministry, but also of "The Great Decay of Feasants and Patriges with an Excedinge Disorder In Hawkeinge." The aggrieved complained that the meaner classes had poached so extensively "the wanted store of game, which was want liberally to Furnish both prince nobele and gentle is now spoyled and destroyed" and reminded Parliament that "the exercise of hawking hath byn alwayes a peculiar disporte of Regalitie, Nobilitie and gentilitie" and was a delight "unfitting for inferior populace." Men who gave special pains for the preservation of the commonwealth deserved special recreations.[39]

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[38] William Hubbard, The Happiness of a People, p. 56. For other Puritan statements on the need to fit outward show to rank see William Perkins, Works, II, 134-6; III, 11; John Downame, The Christian Warfare, pp. 510-13.

Hunting in New England was a way of survival, not the distinguishing sport of a privileged class, but the Puritans found other ways to give "serviceable" men their due honor. Though each New England town decided on its own how it would distribute its land among its inhabitants, many chose some sort of system that tried to preserve existing economic and social distinctions by varying the size of allotments in direct proportion to the receiver's wealth or social status. A Dedham town meeting in 1642 went so far as to vote explicitly to apportion land to the townspeople not only according to the size of their families and their

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39. Winthrop Papers, I, 307-8.

existing state of wealth, but also "According to their Ranke and Qualitie and desert and usefullness either in church or common weale."[40]

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[40] Dedham Records, III, 92. Boston, Sudbury and Charlestown all seemed to follow some sort of land distribution scheme that gave out lots in proportion to social standing, existing estate, "ability to improve the land," or general serviceableness to the commonwealth, all of which, given the Puritan way of thinking, amounted to the same thing. Darrett B. Rutman, Winthrop's Boston (Chapel Hill: 1965), pp. 75-82, 87-92. Sumner C. Powell, Puritan Village (Garden City: 1965), p. 108. Richard Frothingham, The History of Charlestown, Massachusetts (Boston: 1845-9), p. 56. Springfield allotted its house lots in proportion to "every ones quality and estate," its planting ground in proportion to the recipient's ability to use it, and its meadow and pasture according to his cattle and estate ("because estate is like to be imployed in cattel"), all of which tended to preserve existing class distinctions. The Connecticut River towns of Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor also had similar systems, though Wethersfield divided one lot of common land equally in 1670. The First Century of the History of Springfield (ed. Henry M. Burt; Springfield: 1898), I, 156, 158; Charles M. Andrews, The River Towns of Connecticut, Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science (Baltimore: 1889), Seventh Series, VII-IX, 55-63. Writing of land distribution in his projected code of laws for Massachusetts in 1636, John Cotton proposed that "Eminent respect (in this case may be given to men of eminent quality and descent) in assigning unto them more large and honorable accommodations, in regard of their great disbursements to public charges." In 1639 the Rev. Edmund Browne, then of Boston, later of Sudbury, informed Sir Simon D'Ewes that New England gave gentlemen up to six hundred acres a piece as an inducement for them to settle there. Peter Force ed., Tracts and Other Papers, Relating Principally to the Origin, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonies in North America (Washington: 1844), III, no. 9, p. 8; Edmund Browne to Sir Simon D'Ewes, 7 September 1639, Publ. CSM (Boston: 1905), VII, 75.

Superior worth could also expect certain external signs of social deference: the order on school and college class lists, the seating in many churches, and the use of honorifics ranging from "goodman" upwards to Esquire all existed to indicate men's places in the social scale.[41] Both the Massachusetts and Connecticut governments lent a hand by passing sumptuary legislation restricting fine apparel to men of quality. The Massachusetts General Court declared "our utter detestation and dislike that men or women of meane condition, educations, and callings should take uppon them the garbe of gentlemen, by the wearinge of gold or silver lace, or buttons, or points at their knees, or to walke in greate bootes, or women of the same rank to weare silk or tiffany hoodes or scarfes, which though allowable to persons of greater estates, or more liberall education, yett wee cannot but judge it intollerable in persons of such like condition." After 1651 statute would restrict the privilege of wearing such finery to individuals having a total estate greater than £ 200 and their families. The list of persons exempted from the statute was also significant: magistrates and public officers, certain military officers, soldiers in time of military service, "or any other whose education and imployments have binn above the ordinary degree, or whose estates have binn considerable, though now decayed. . . ."[42]

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[41] 41. *Cf. infra*, Chapter VI, pp. 306-13, 320-21.

Salus Populi remained Supreme Lex in Puritan theory, at least officially, and those able to contribute to it most effectively would remain a superior class. A very traditional theoretical edifice received its equally traditional capstone, an hereditary aristocracy, with the assumption that virtuous parents passed on their gifts to their descendants:

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[42] Mass. Rec. IV, Pt. 1, 60-61; IV, Pt. 2, 41-2; V, 59-60. Massachusetts had a number of sumptuary laws before 1651, but none of them discriminated by classes, applying equally to all, and all of them were repealed in 1644. Mass. Rec. II, 84. Connecticut copied the Massachusetts law almost verbatim in 1676, lowering the £ 200 to £ 150. Conn. Rec., II, 283. In 1641 Connecticut had passed a much less specific regulation empowering town constables to restrain "all such as they judge to exceed their conditions and ranks" by their apparel. Conn. Rec., I, 64.

> For the Lord having bestowed some heroicall gifts and graces upon some speciall men, as wisdome, magnanimitie, fortitude, magnificence, courtestie, liberalitie and the rest; doth also for the good of common-wealthes usually vouchsafe, that there should be certaine seeds of these virtues derived after a secret and unknowne manner, from them successively unto their posteritie, whereby being come to maturitie, they resemble their ancestors in these special graces.[43]

III. A New World

The concept of social order did not suffer much of a sea change in its transfer to the New World. Seventeenth century New England Puritans looked at society much as their English ancestors had for centuries. If anything their approach sometimes seemed a little old fashioned. English sumptuary regulation had reached its greatest proliferation in late Tudor times and disappeared on or shortly after the death of Elizabeth in 1603, never to be reestablished.[43a] Massachusetts did not even pass its first class-biased law on apparel until 1651 and it strengthened it again in 1662 and 1675. A recent description of Tudor social policy would fit almost as well as a summary of the ruling assumptions of Massachusetts magistrates and ministers:

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[43] John Downame, The Christian Warfare, p. 490. Cf. Ruth Kelso, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century, Univ. of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature (Urbana: 1929), XIV, pp. 35-36.

> The ideal of Tudor statesmen was organic: society was made up of members performing different functions for the common good. The ideal was also hierarchical: though all parts of the commonwealth were indispensable, they were not equal, but differed in degree and excellence as well as in kind. The role of policy was to maintain and support good order as good order had been understood for several centuries--social peace and harmony in a status-based society.[44]

Yet much that was present in Puritanism and much that was lacking in New England had a strange effect on European doctrine called on to function on a new and different shore. Puritanism never wanted for paradoxes, but most paradoxical

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43a. For Tudor sumptuary regulation and its fall see Francis E. Baldwin, Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England (Baltimore: 1926), pp. 192-225.

44. J.H. Hexter, Reappraisals in History (New York: 1963), p. 108.

of all was its insistence that while men must do only the good, they must do it voluntarily. Coercion might well be necessary; it would never be moral. If men would serve God, "they must not only do what is materially so, but on that very account because it is a publick service. Men must serve their generation in _knowledge_ and _deliberation_ of what they do; they must perform this service on _choice_ and not on _compulsion_, in _obedience_ to the _will_ and _pleasure_ of God, at whose tribunal they must account here-for."[45]

The attraction of salvation by grace for Puritans lay in its restoration of human freedom of choice and action without any of the dangers that ordinarily went with it. Reborn through the effects of saving grace, the regenerate would want to do good from the love of God where before they had done it only from fear of punishment. The saved did not cease from sinning, but that could be attributed to the imperfections of the process of regeneration in an imperfect world, and then coercion could always be called in again to deal with the remnant of the Old Man that still existed inside the new without compromising the original doctrine.

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[45] Ebenezar Pemberton, _A True Servant of His Generation Characterized in Sermons and Discourses on Various Occasions_, pp. 219-220. The voluntaristic note in Puritan theory, embodied in their conceptions of the covenant, has been brought out and explained in detail by Perry Miller in _The New England Mind, The Seventeenth Century_ (Boston: 1961), pp. 365-491. Reference is to the Beacon Press paperback edition.

Though bordering on the jesuitical, applied to social theory this doctrine had unpredictable consequences. Winthrop, John Cotton and other of Massachusetts' leaders and thinkers sometimes talked of the commonwealth as divided into the customary three parts (ministers, magistrates and people), neglecting to mention that in Massachusetts the third estate elected the first two--or rather, the regenerate part of it did, for only church members might become freemen and (at least after 1634) only the regenerate might become church members. If the ministers never tired of telling the people that God required them to elect only men of wisdom and virtue to the offices of magistrate and pastor and that once elected, rulers, civil and spiritual, ceased to be responsible to the electors, nothing forced either church members of freemen to follow those injunctions--nothing, except their own traditional sense of order which they shared with their rulers.[46] Subordination certainly existed in Massachusetts, but a subordination by mutual consent. The Dedham land system noted earlier passed at a town meeting attended by fifty-two men, easily the majority of adult males then living in the town, and the sumptuary laws were enacted by both houses of a legislature elected by the very men to whom they would apply.

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[46] This theme is treated at length in Chapter III.

Since it depended so heavily on the people's consent the system did not always function smoothly: not every town was as consistently generous as Dedham,[47] not every freeman always chose to respect the prerogatives of the magistrates. By and large, however, events went as magistrates and ministers said they ought to go, because the people accepted their claims to a superior status and because all classes held the goals of New England, the sense of mission, in common. It could hardly be otherwise in a state where the law not only permitted but required every adult male to bear arms, and where the ultimate police power rested exclusively on local militias made up of all the male inhabitants, free and non-free.[48] No one has yet discovered a method to oppress a society of armed men unless they want to be oppressed, and then the word "oppression" loses all meaning.

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[47] Clashes over the restrictive land system occurred among the inhabitants of both Sudbury and Boston, for example, and in the case of Sudbury ended in the founding of Marlborough, Massachusetts where land was allotted approximately equally. Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, pp. 65, 78-82, 85-87, 96, 157; Powell, Puritan Village, pp. 150-177.

Fact, then, could agree with theory only so long as men agreed to let it. And yet from the earliest days of settlement many facts about New England contradicted the accepted European social classifications enunciated in terms of a hierarchy of varying ranks. Sir Thomas Smith wrote in his celebrated De Republica Anglorum that "the commonwealth of England, it is governed, administered, and manured by three sorts of persons": the monarch, the gentlemen (subdivided into Barons, Knights, Esquires and simple gentlemen), and the yeomanry. At the bottom of the heap came "the fourth sort of men which doe not rule," comprising "day labourers, poore husbandmen, yea merchants or retailers which have no free lande, copiholders, and all artificers. . . ."[49] The commonwealths of New England were constructed on rather different principles. They did not have the upper and lower extremes of the English social scale, most men owned their own land in fee simple, and in Massachusetts, at least, many, possibly most, men could vote and hold office--after 1647 all could serve on juries and as town officers.[50] Sir Thomas's four categories were reduced to two: simple gentlemen and a combined class of

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[48] For the militia laws see Mass. Rec., I, 84, 85, 125, 190; II, 222; Plymouth Rec., I, 6; Conn. Rec., I, 15; Acts and Laws of His Majesty's Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations in America (Boston: 1719), p. 86,

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49. L. Alston, ed., De Republica Anglorum (Cambridge: 1906), pp. 31-47.

50. On the extent of the Massachusetts freemanship see Appendix A. The law permitting non-freemen to serve on juries and hold local offices is in Mass. Rec., II, 197. The extent of the Connecticut franchise is even less clear than that of Massachusetts, but a recent study indicates that a majority of the adult males probably were eligible to become freemen, though perhaps only half those who could actually did take the freeman's oath. Speculation on the Plymouth franchise is yet more conjectural: such evidence as exists--and there is not much of it--points to a wide franchise, at least before 1672. David H. Fowler, "Connecticut's Freemen: the First Forty Years," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, XV (1958), 312-333; George D. Langdon, Jr., "The Franchise and Political Democracy in Plymouth Colony," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, XX (1963), 513-526.

yeomen and the fourth sort, most of whom did own land and who could rule after a fashion.

When it came down to talking about New England society in concrete terms rather than about Man or angels even the theorists described it more in terms of a duality than an ascending hierarchy. Winthrop's Model of Christian Charity divided men into just two sorts, the rich and the poor, meaning those who could support themselves and those who could not,[51] while the sumptuary laws replaced the complicated gradations of their Tudor equivalents with a simple two part division into those entitled to wear finery and those forbidden to. "Two distinct ranks we willingly acknowledge from the light of nature and scripture," John Cotton informed Lord Say and Seele in 1636, "the one of them called Princes, or Nobles, or Elders (amongst whom gentlemen have their place), the other the people."[51a]

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[51] "All men being thus (by divine providence) rancked into two sortes, rich and poore; under the first, are comprehended all such as are able to live comfortably by their own meanes duely improved; and all others are poore according to the former distribution." Winthrop Papers, II, 283.

Perhaps Cotton was not just tailoring theory to reality. More than most, Puritans tended to see things in bipolar terms. He who is not with the Lord is against him, after all, and men do not receive grace by degrees. Besides, if civil societies were analogous to ecclesiastical ones, allowing a graded chain of superiors in the former might have dangerous consequences for congregational polity in the latter.[52] In any case, for all the talk of the graded ranks of angels in Heaven, New England society came to be viewed as split into only two major ranks, and the gulf between them would by no means prove unbridgeable.

[51a] "Certain Proposals made by Lord Say, Lord Brooke, and other Persons of quality, as conditions of their removing to New-England, with the answers thereto," in Thomas Hutchinson, History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay (ed. L.S. Mayo; Cambridge, Mass.: 1936), I, 410.

[52] In fact, the Tudor Puritan Phillip Stubbes had defended bishops on just these grounds. He admitted they had no divine ordination and could not be justified by scripture, but held that a Christian Prince may set one man above another in dignity in ecclesiastical societies as well as in civil, and that such a system might be as useful and lawful in the one as in the other. Anatomy of Abuses, p. 103. Thomas Hooker admitted that the same logic applied to all associations founded by covenant, the church as much as the state: ". . . in all voluntary covenants, which arise from the free consent of party and party, there is no difference to be found in those covenants, but in the peculiar and Individuall formality of speciall ingagements, which passe betwixt party and party. and therefore the difference is there alone to be sought, and there alone it can be found." A Survey of the Summe of Church-Discipline, p. 66.

Here social mobility received a boost from, of all disciplines, formal logic. Puritans in both England and America had avidly adopted the logical system of the French Protestant humanist Petrus Ramus (1515-1572), probably because he satisfied their penchant for dichotomy with a vengeance. Breaking with scholastic Aristotelian logic, Ramus had adopted the Platonic tenet that all universals exist as eternal ideas in the mind of God and then proceeded to divide and subdivide God's mind ad infinitum. The basic unit of thought he called an "argument," meaning anything that indicated the relationship between things, and the method by which arguments could be combined into coherent discourse he named "judgment." Both arguments and judgment were subdivided many times over to lay bare the basic forms by which God had given structure to the cosmos and to the Bible, both of which men could understand by use of the same logical method, the Ramus Dialectic. "Truth therefore becomes for the Ramist, and through him for the

Puritan, clear-eyed perception of immutable essences, beauty becomes correspondence to them, virtue becomes conformity to them."[53]

Somehow after Ramus had finished his classification of subsets within subsets, at the end of all the dichotomies the most basic arguments turned out to be the categories of Aristotle. One of these was the "relatives," which Ramists defined more narrowly than Aristotle as "contraries affirming; the one whereof consists by the mutual relation to the other." That meant relatives were two terms standing in a one to one relationship and that they could only be defined by reference to each other. Ramists commonly gave as examples "Priest and people, Maister and Servant, Mistress

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53. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, The Puritans (New York: 1963), p. 31. Reference is to the Harper paperback edition. Miller treats the significance of the dialectic for Puritans briefly in ibid., pp. 27-40 and at much greater length in The New England Mind, The Seventeenth Century, especially in pages 111-180. The Ramus Dialectic in itself and in its place in European history is the subject of Walter J. Ong's difficult but outstanding Ramus: method, and the decay of dialogue (Cambridge, Mass.: 1958). For the social implications of the dialectic I can not overstate my debt to Edmund S. Morgan, particularly to his discussion in The Puritan Family, the first chapter of the revised edition of which I read in manuscript.

and maid, &c." and pointed out that "because of this mutual relation, Relatives are said to be together in nature: so that he which perfectly knowes the one knoweth the other also."[54]

For Aristotle relatives were merely one of ten classes of predicates, one of ten types of things men could say about a subject; [redacted] looked upon them as one of the central principles by which the universe was organized. Most Puritans (and some Anglicans) consequently felt it necessary to classify all social obligations in terms of relative duties, the mutual duties due between father and son, minister and people, magistrate and subject, master and servant, and superior and inferior in general.[55] Thomas Hooker made the whole concept particularly appealing to Congregationalists by pointing out that if minister and people were relatives, then a man could not be a minister apart from the particular people with whom he stood in a relationship, and Anglican and Presbyterian claims for a continuous and independent status for the minister whether he was pastor of a particular flock or not consequently fell to the ground.

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[54] Samuel Wotton, *The Art of Logick* (London: 1626), pp. 55-58. This is one of many English translations of Ramus' *Dialecticae libri duo* with a detailed English commentary. *Cf*. Abraham Fraunce, *The Lawiers Logike* (London: 1588), pp. 48 recto-49 recto. Aristotle wrote that "We call a thing relative, when it is said to be such as it is from its being *of* some other thing or, if not, from its being related to something in some other way." The Ramists with their absorption in dichotomies always spoke of relatives in the plural as *two* things in a contrary though not an opposite relation (one was not the direct negation of the other), and though they would have accepted most of Aristotle's examples of relatives, they would not have extended the term to cover knowledge and the thing known, or wing and "the winged" as he did. Aristotle, *The Organon* (Loeb Classical Library Edition; Cambridge, Mass.: 1938), I, 47-63.

> The Proposition is supported by the *fundamental* principles of reason, so that he must rase out of the received rules of Logick that must reject it: *Relata sunt, quorum unum constat e mutua alterius affectione* [those things are related, one of which springs from mutual affection to the other]: and hence all men that will not

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[55] The relative duties are summarized in Samuel Willard, *A Compleat Body of Divinity*, pp. 600-631 (second pagination). The Anglican writers William Sherlock, Dean of St. Paul's, and Jeremy Taylor, chaplain to Laud and later Lord Bishop of Down and Comer, both used the concept. Sherlock, *A Discourse on Divine Providence* (2nd ed.; London: 1694), pp. 355, 356; Taylor, *Ductor Dubitantium* (4th ed.; London: 1696), pp. 304, 739.

> stifle and stop the passage of rationall discourse, forthwith infer, that therefore they are simul natura, are together in nature one with another. [56]

The modern reader that will not stifle and stop the passage of rational discourse should understand that Hooker meant that if pastor and congregation were indeed true relative terms, the pastor could not come into existence before or separate from his ordination over a particular congregation, though, of course, he who became the pastor still existed as a man before ordination.

The same fundamental principles of reason made the existence in an absolute sense of any kind of social class impossible. No man was a superior or an inferior by nature, but only as he stood in relation to some other man. Both Hooker and Samuel Willard pointed out that a man might conceivably be a superior in one relation and an inferior in another: he might, for example, be the father of a family but the subject of a ruler. Two men could even be simultaneously each other's inferior and superior, depending on which relationship applied to them at any given time. A magistrate stood superior to a minister when the latter appeared as one of his subjects but inferior to him when he himself functioned as a member of the minister's congregation.[57] In parodying the Presbyterian claims to an independent ministerial status by comparing them to other social relationships, Thomas Hooker also incidentally demolished the concept of a master class or caste:

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[56] Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline, p. 68 (2nd pagination).

> Should a man come to a servant, and tell him, I am a master of servants. . . . Therefore thou art my servant, and must do the work of my family.
>
> Should people of one congregation come to the Pastour of another, and tell him; come and bestow your pains constantly with us, for its all one as if you did it with you own people, for its folly to seek for differences in covenant, betwixt Pastor and people, for that makes no difference, since the covenant is common to all. . . . Therefore you are our Pastor, and must do the work of our congregation.
>
> That a man should be a generall Husband to all women, or a woman a generall wife to all men, because marriage-covenant is common to all. It seems strange at the first sight, and therefore, [if] its

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[57] Ibid., p. 62 (second pag.); Willard, Compleat Body of Divinity, p. 600 (2nd pag.).

> counted folly on our part to seek any difference here, . . . [then] we are content to bear the charge of folly for it. [58]

Even Puritans did not construct their social system out of textbooks of logic, but the Ramus Dialectic was descriptive, not prescriptive anyway. It purported to be a description of the actual nature of the world and in doing so it gave its advocates in New England a way to interpret and accept social mobility and the partial failure of their plan to give wealth to those with political power and political power to those with high social status.

Despite the eternal principle of distributive justice, the New England colonies never found an effective way to compensate their magistrates for the time they spent away from their business affairs caring for the state, so that the early governors including Winthrop and Endecott developed a distressing tendency to die near bankrupt. On Endecott's death in 1665 John Hull, Boston mintmaster and merchant, jotted down in his diary:

> He died poor, as most of our rulers do, having more attended the public than their own private interests.

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[58] Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline, pp. 66-67 (second pag.).

> It is our shame: though we are indeed a poor people, yet might better maintain our rulers than we do. 59

Many men before, during and after the seventeenth century have found government office a source of profit, but Massachusetts could not even afford to pay its magistrates the costs of their office except by giving them large grants of land. That land in turn could not be developed without capital, just what governors and government did not have, while in the seventeenth century it had relatively little speculative value because of the availability of other free land: many magistrates ended up land rich but broke. Followed to its logical conclusion the Puritan social ethic would have produced a Ferris wheel mobility with the poor

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59. The Diary of John Hull, Archaeologia Americana (Boston: 1857), III, 215. The same thing happened to an extent to Hull himself. The favor of the state in the form of an appointment as its mintmaster made him an immensely rich man, so rich he was elected colony treasurer during King Phillip's War and had to bail out the colony periodically with his own funds. When he died Massachusetts was in debt to him for £ 1700, only £ 450 of which were ever repaid. Hull, however, was so wealthy he left one of the largest estates in Massachusetts anyway. Others were not as fortunate. On the problem of renting land cf. infra, Chapter V, p. 271, nt. 31.

enjoined to grow rich and the rich injoined in effect to grow poor by taking on the responsibility of government. Samuel Symonds, later deputy governor of Massachusetts, was not attempting whimsy when he wrote John Winthrop in 1647 that he thought God had brought His people to New England "To exercise the graces of the ritcher sort in a more mixt condiccion, they shall have liberty of good government in their hands yet with the abatement of their outward estates. And that the poorer sort (held under in England) should have inlargement."[60]

Even the characteristic New England form of land tenure compromised traditional social distinctions. Some people owned much more land than others, but almost everybody owned it by right of freehold. In a status based society the means by which men earn their income may have as much to do with their social standing as that income's size, and in New England only a relatively few men had enough good land to rent part or all of it out to tenants and live off the income.[60a] Plymouth's governor, William Bradford, had discovered in that colony's early days when the settlers shared their crops equally that similarity of economic status damaged a due social order:

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[60] Samuel Symonds to John Winthrop, 11 January 1646/47, Winthrop Papers, V, 126.

[60a] Jackson Turner Maine provides the best discussion to date of the social structure of New England and the middle colonies in The Social Structure of Revolutionary America (Princeton: 1965), Chapter I. Maine draws his conclusions for the most part from data of a period later than that under discussion here, but they would seem to apply equally well to the seventeenth century since such evidence of social stratification as he does find he attributes to the greater development of the colonial economy in some areas and to the increasing extent of commercialization in the cities and the farming areas near them. Of New England Maine writes: "The subsistance farm society was the most common type throughout New England and perhaps in the entire North. The social structure, like that of the frontier remained simple. Great wealth could not be or had not yet been accumulated; therefore no wealthy class was present. Neither did the landless laborers increase in numbers, for land was not very valuable and therefore could be easily obtained; besides, those who wanted wealth did not remain in such an area but sought richer lands. Accordingly a majority of the residents continued to occupy a middle-class position and to remain small farmers. It was a frontier in arrested development." Ibid., p. 18. Even in the cities, however, where the gap between rich and poor reached its greatest extent, the rich owned rather less of the total wealth of the community than they do today.

> Upon the poynte of all being to have alike, and all to doe alike, they thought them selves in the like condition, and one as good as another, and so, if it did not cut of those relations that God hath set amongest men, yet it did at least much diminish and take of the mutuall respects that should be preserved amongst them. And it would have been worse if they had been men of another condition.[61]

Social order suffered from more than the land and the land system; forms of government established entirely by men affected it in unwanted ways. Not only could many more men enjoy the franchise in Massachusetts than in England, some who could have voted in England failed to become freemen in the New World because of the restriction of suffrage to church members, a restriction that often excluded men of substance. A small farmer or even a shoemaker could vote if he was in full communion with some church, but the owner of a forty shilling freehold or even a gentleman who lacked that qualification could not. Lord Say and Seele, Lord Brook "and other Persons of quality" appreciated that fact enough to demand that Massachusetts establish an hereditary upper house of its legislature for them and their heirs as the condition on which they would remove to New England. John Cotton had the unenviable job of answering them and although he hedged on most of their demands and did his best to misrepresent the magistrates as identical to the English House of Lords, even he balked at the [redacted] insistence on identifying hereditary social status with political privilege: "Though we receive them [gentlemen] with honor and allow them pre-eminence and accommodations according to their condition yet we do not, ordinarily, call them forth to the power of election, or administration of magistracy, until they be received as members into some of our churches. . . . Hereditary honors both nature and scripture doth acknowledge . . . but hereditary authority and power standeth only by the civil laws of some commonwealths." Besides, "if God should not delight to furnish some of their posterity with gifts fit for magistracy, we should expose them rather to reproach and prejudice, and the commonwealth with them, than exalt them to honor, if we should call them forth when God doth not, to public authority."[62] For all its adherence to time-honored social doctrine Puritanism on both sides of the ocean contained a strong radical streak that set up an absolute standard by which even traditional authority and the authority of tradition must be judged and discarded if found wanting.

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[61] History of Plymouth Plantation (Boston: 1912), I, 302-3.

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[62] Quoted in Thomas Hutchinson, History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay, I, 411-13.

In England that fact cost Charles I his head; New England had less trouble with wicked rulers or ungodly authority and so less need to invoke the unsettling slogan, "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God." Yet even Massachusetts took only a short time to discover that in carrying out a holy mission in a corrupt world not even gentlemen who were church members could be automatically entrusted with all the powers that went with their rank in England. When Henry Vane, Esq., son of Sir Henry Vane, comptroller of the royal household, came over in 1636 he quickly joined the Boston church and the people just as quickly elected him governor on the basis of his lineage despite his youth and his recent arrival. During the crisis over Anne Hutchinson's Antinomian heresies that rocked the colony a few months later, Vane, to Winthrop's horror, sided with the Hutchinsonians and actually led a move with two other magistrates to censure John Wilson, pastor of the Boston church, for his dogged defense of orthodoxy. Winthrop soon learned the awful lesson that superiors govern by bad example as well as good:

> It was strange to see, how the common people were led, by example, to condemn him [Wilson] in that, which (it was probable) divers of them did not understand, nor the rule which he was supposed to have broken; and that such as had known him so long, and what good he had done for that church, should fall upon him for justifying himself in a good cause; for he was a very holy, upright man, and for faith and love inferior to none in the country, and most dear to all men.[63]

The Antinomians were overcome and banished for all that and Vane dropped from the governorship and the magistracy in 1637. He returned to England in disgust, but the experience had been a painful one for the Bay Colony: mere rank coupled with professed piety did not always qualify a man for government. The Rev. Thomas Shepard of Cambridge preached the election sermon in 1638 and he made sure to point up to the assembled freemen the appropriate moral of Vane's apostacy. In one mordant breath he destroyed the whole of the tenuous structure of qualification and prevarication John Cotton had constructed to bedazzle Lord Say and

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[63] Winthrop Jl., I, 250.

Sele and Lord Brook:

> . . . let any come over among us never so nobly descended never so pious. Let men seeme to be never so fayre some good estate, it may be their judgments or harts may be so corrupt and apt to be caryed by private respects that [they are] troublers not keepers of vineyard: & hence: none chosen till the freemen know and give their voluntary assent thereto: known for wisdom holines publicke spirit[.] [64]

After that the freemen would exercise more caution in their choice of magistrates but they would not abandon their attachment to order or to distributive justice. New England did not provide the best environment for the establishment of a society built on those two principles and many elements in Puritanism did not coexist with them easily; nevertheless, they would continue to maintain a hold on men's minds and actions for over a century, even when they ceased to be very relevant to the realities of New England life. Proceeding from the general to the specific, the chapters that follow will discuss their effect on the details of political, economic and social activity as well as the later development of Puritan social ideology under changed conditions. First, however, it will be necessary to examine an abortive attempt to base social organization on a less traditional and more peculiarly Puritan foundation than order: love.

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[64] "Thomas Shephard's Election Sermon," New England Historical and Geneological Register, XXIV (1870), 366.

CHAPTER II

THE BASIS OF INEQUALITY (II): LOVE

Of the three arguments for the divine sanction of inequality with which the Model of Christian Charity begins, the first sounds absurd today, the second rings sophistical and the third seems cynical. Yet John Winthrop undoubtedly believed them; he was not trying to defend the interests of his class in preaching the Model, he was taking up the age old problem of theodicy, the justification of God's ways to man. He knew inequality existed, he could not believe that God did not--therefore, God must have had reasons for making men as He did, and those reasons had to be good.

The first of them, the argument from plenitude has already been discussed. The second Winthrop mentioned briefly and then passed on: God made men imperfect in order to give Himself something to do after their creation and in order to allow them an opportunity to manifest certain graces (mercy, gentleness, temperance among the rich, faith, patience, obedience among the poor) they would have no need for if all were equal. The bulk of the Model concerned the third, the theory that God created inequality as an inducement to love because men of unequal talents would "have need of [each] other, and from hence they might be all knitt more nearly together in the Bond of brotherly affecion."[1] It would be almost another century before John Wise would point out that men would cooperate most effectively in that society in which they would pool their services as equals, knowing they all had an equal right to ask assistance of each other, but by that time "Man" would have become a very different creature than in 1630.[2]

By "charity" Winthrop referred not to alms but to love, the concept contained in the greek word _agape_, translated _caritas_ in the Vulgate and rendered "charity" in some sections of the Genevan and King James Bibles. His brief for class distinction rested exclusively on love not order, and the _Model_ strikingly lacked any appeal to subordination as the only proper division of labour or as the most beautiful and natural scheme. Order appealed to the reason, and since the Fall the reason was unreliable.

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[1] _Winthrop Papers,_ II, 28. William Perkins also founded society on love and inequality. _Works,_ I, 732.

[2] John Wise, _A Vindication of the Government of the New England Churches_ (ed. Perry Miller; Gainesville, Florida: 1958), p. 41. This is a reprint of the edition of 1717.

> . . . the way to draw men to the workes of mercy is not by force of Argument from the goodnes or necessity of the worke, for though this course may enforce a rationall minde to some present Act of mercy as is frequent in experience, yet it cannot worke such a habit in a Soule as shall make it prompt upon all occasions to produce the same effect but by frameing these affeccions of love in the hearte which will as natively bring forthe the other, as any cause doth produce the effect.[3]

Men "walked" towards one another by two rules, Justice and Mercy, but Winthrop declared it his intention "to omitt the rule of Justice as not propperly belong to this purpose." Similarly, though both "the law of nature" and the "law of grace, or the morrall lawe or the lawe of the gospell" regulated human conduct, he chose to concentrate on the latter, abandoning any intention to call on men to love their neighbors as themselves while the self remained corrupt.[4]

Many thinkers both before and after the Reformation had considered love an essential, even the essential basis of society, but they all talked of the love of the law of nature, the command given to man in his innocency, and Winthrop knew men to be no longer innocent. The rule he would have his listeners obey did not propound "one man to another as the same fleshe and Image of god" but "as a brother in Christ allsoe, and in the communion of the same spirit and soe teaches us to put a difference betweene christians and others."[5]

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[3] Winthrop Papers, II, 288.

[4] Ibid., II, 284.

He said "Christians" but he meant "regenerate Christians," men who had experienced saving grace. Love in Puritan logic sprang from faith and faith from God's mere and free grace. Thirty years before Winthrop's lecture on the _Arbella,_ William Perkins had laid down the elemental doctrine that "faith is the cause of love, and love is the fruit of faith"[6] and labeled the contrary claim a popish error. Love and grace were so interconnected, love of one's brethern served like diligence in a calling as one of the "signs and infallible notes of our election."[7]

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[5] _Ibid_., II, 284.

[6] _A Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians_ in _Works_, II, 313.

[7] John Downame, _The Christian Warfare_, p. 125.

The social implications of regenerate love derived from a peculiarly Puritan appreciation of sin and its consequences. Adam before the Fall, Winthrop intoned to his audience, had the principle of love in him naturally, but by his disobedience he rent not only himself from his creator but "all his posterity allsoe one from another."[8] The self and self-love were two of the results. Winthrop would undoubtedly have followed Thomas Hooker in defining the self as "those Principles and Opinions which by Nature, now corrupted, are in every one, and incline him to establish his own Independencie of any other whatsoever, yea even of God Himselfe, and to crook every thing toward himself, so making himselfe the sole end of his thoughts, words and actions" or more briefly as "our owne Will to be or have any thing contrary to the Will of God." Many generations later men would dignify that emotion with the title of "individualism" but for Hooker and his contemporaries it was "the Devils first Handsale, his Masterpiece that Grand

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[8] *Winthrop Papers*, II, 290.

Fundamentall Designe on which he has built his Kingdom ever since."[9]

By contrast "Self-Denyal," the realization that nothing existed apart from God, Hooker called "the very Foundation of Christianity, yea the Grand Designe of all Theologie." All vice proceeded from self-love, all virtue from self-denial, and love rested totally on the latter. Only grace could enable man to conquer self-love and replace it by love to all. By themselves they had an "utter Imbecility, to subdue It."[10] Winthrop summarized the doctrine concisely: ". . . every man is borne with this principle in him, to love and seeke himselfe onely and thus a man continueth till Christ comes and takes possession of the soule, and infuseth another principle love to God and our brother."[11]

Grace did not simply cause love, it embodied it. Regenerate men recognized the same principle in other regenerate men that existed in themselves and loved them for it, realizing they were not reunited, however imperfectly, with each other and with the body of God.

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[9] Heautona [illegible]umenos: or a Treatise of Self-Denyall (London: 1646), pp. 22, 24-5, 5-7.

[10] Ibid., pp. 5-7, 56.

[11] Winthrop Papers, II, 290.

> . . . soe the ground of love is an apprehension of some resemblance in the things loved to that which affectes it, this is the cause why the Lord loves the Creature, soe farre as it hath any of his Image in it, he loves his elect because they are like himselfe, he beholds them in his beloved sonne. . . . Thus it is betweene the member of Christ, each discernes by the worke of the spirit his owne Image and resemblance in another, and therefore cannot but love him as he loves himselfe.[12]

While men retained what Hooker called "this vile, vain Body of ours," regeneration would be imperfect and so consequently would be love and reunion in one body, but even on earth men were in some sense knit together with one another and with Christ by love. "Christ and his church make one body: the severall partes of this body considered aparte before they were united were as disproportionate and as much disordering as soe many contrary quallities or elements but when christ comes and his spirit and love knitts all these partes to himselfe and each to other, it is become the most perfect and best proportioned body in the world."[13]

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[12] Ibid., pp. 5-7, 56.

[13] Ibid., II, 288.

This doctrine of an almost physical tie between members of the Invisible Church gave new meaning and impact to the Puritan use of the time-worn metaphors of society or the church as a body. When they spoke of community (a concept some modern writers have strangely seen fit to praise them for) they did not mean the truism that society consists of more than a collection of atomized individuals; they meant Communion in the sacramental sense. Love was a kind of socialized Eucharist.

That concept and its fusion with Protestant doctrines of grace and regeneration distinguished Puritan love from the traditional kind, which reached its apotheosis under the Commonwealthmen in the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI,[14] and gave Christian charity in New England a distinctly sinister potential. Winthrop could not separate out the regenerate from the reprobate aboard ship and probably did not want to. God would take care of that on Judgement Day and until then it would not do for mortals to usurp His function. But once they had established their Congregational churches in fact as well as in theory, the Massachusetts Bay Puritans grew more confident of their ability to bring about some sort of conformity between the invisible and visible churches. By 1636 they were restricting church membership to those who could provide a reasonable proof of having experienced a work of saving grace. Most of the first generation of settlers believed they had, so it made little difference; their progeny would not be so fortunate.[15]

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[14] On the doctrine of love in medieval and Tudor thought see Ruth Mohl, The Three Estates in Medieval and Renaissance Literature (New York: 1933), pp. 369-376; J.W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (Reprinted with revised bibliography; London: 1957), pp. 134-156.

Winthrop did not have to face that problem. To him and his generation love to God and man was not just the English translation of some New Testament Greek, but a real, vivid passion in which agape, philos and even eros all mixed. When it came to writing of love, the Governor, whose literary style was ordinarily sobriety itself, sought his images in the Song of Solomon. To his God he prayed, "Let us heare thy sweet voice of thine, my love my dove, my

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15. The development of and gradual change in the concept of restricted church membership is the main subject of Edmund S. Morgan's Visible Saints, especially pp. 94-106. Statistics on the church membership of adult males are given in Appendix A.

undefiled . . . make us sicke with thy love" and on taking final leave of an old friend, Sir William Springe, he wrote him:

> I loved you truly before I could think that you took any notice of me: but now I embrace you and rest in your love: and delight to solace my first thoughts in these sweet affections of so deare a friend. The apprehension of your love and worth togither have overcome my heart, and [redacted] the veil of modestye, that I must needes tell you, my soule is knitt to you as the soule of Jonathan to David: were I now with you, I should bedewe that sweet bosome with the teares of affection: O what a pinche will it be to me, to parte with such a freinde! If any Embleme may expresse our Condition in heaven, it is this Communion in love.[16]

If communion meant anything at all it meant unity. "The Kingdom of God," Thomas Shephard wrote, "is not divided against itself."[17] The rich would not oppress the poor, men would aid each other with their own goods and not seek their own interests, inferior would not rise against superior, superior would have respect for inferior, and everyone would cheerfully seek each other's good, taking their satisfaction in the prosperity of the whole, of which love made them an inseparable part.

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[16] John Winthrop to Sir William Springe, 8 Feb. 1629/30, Winthrop Papers, II, 205-6.

[17] Election Sermon of 1638, NEH&GR, XXIV, 364.

> wee must be knitt together in this worke as one man, we must entertaine each other in brotherly Affeccion, we must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities, for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekenes, gentlenes, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in eache other, make others Condicions our owne rejoyce together, mourne together, labour, and suffer together, allwayes haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body, soe shall wee keepe the unitie of the spirit in the bond of peace.[18]

"Unitie" often included sheer physical closeness. "Society in all sorts of human affairs is better than solitariness" wrote John Cotton, who had no use for "popish anchorites and hermits who think solitary life a state of perfection."[19] Massachusetts Bay may even have been originally planned as a single enormous town,[20] and the leaders of both the Bay and the Plymouth colonies reacted to the fact of geographical dispersion with suspicion. John Winthrop tried to block the removal of Thomas Hooker and his Cambridge congregation to Connecticut on the grounds "That, in point of conscience, they ought not to depart from us, being knit to us in one body, and bound by oath to seek the welfare of this commonwealth."[21] Winthrop's Plymouth counterpart, Governor William Bradford, thought extensive farming would be the ruin of New England:

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[18] Winthrop Papers, II, 293-4.

[19] A Brief Exposition on Ecclesiastes, pp. 44-45.

[20] On this point see Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, pp. 280-283, and on the effects of geographical dispersion on the Puritan ideal, pp. 96-7.

> . . . no man now [1632] thought he could live, except he had cattle and a great deale of ground to keep them; all striving to increase their stocks. By which means they were scattered all over the bay, quickly, and the towne, in which they lived compactly till now, was left very thine, and in a short time allmost desolate. And if this had been all, it had been less, though to much; but the church must also be divided, and those that had lived so long togeather in christian and comfortable fellowship must now part and suffer many divissions. . . . And this, I fear, will be the ruine of New-England, at least of the churches of God there, and will provock the Lords displeasure against them.[22]

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[21] Winthrop Jl, I, 167.

[22] History of Plymouth Plantation, II, 152-3. Like Plymouth from 1624-32, Massachusetts Bay from 1636 to 1640 had laws in effect forbidding the inhabitants to live more than half a mile from the meeting house of a settled town,

From William Bradford to Timothy Dwight one wing of the Puritan intelligentsia regarded physical expansion with hostility no matter how inevitable it became in a land of expanding population and vast unsettled spaces.[23]

In such a scheme of values the greatest social miscarriage had to consist in the clearest breaches in the

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although given the dates of the Massachusetts law this may have been simply for the purpose of defense against the Indians rather than to keep community. The laws have no preambles. Mass. Rec. I, 157, 181, 291.

[23] Increase Mather managed to tie in geographical dispersion with covetousness and both themes with his favorite subject, the degeneration of New England. ". . . whereas the first Planters here that they might keep themselves togethere were satisfied with one Acre for each person as his propriety, and after that with twenty Acres for a Family, how have Men since coveted after the earth, that many hundreds, nay thousands of Acres, have been engrossed by one man, and they that profess themselves Christians, have forsaken the churches, and Ordinance, and all for land and elbow-room enough in the World." An Earnest Exhortation to the Inhabitants of New England (Boston: 1676), pp. 9-10. Actually, as Allan Heimert has shown, the Puritan attitude towards frontier expansion included a good deal of satisfaction and enthusiasm for the spreading of the gospel in previously uninhabited parts and the "conquest" of the wilderness. Only their appreciation of the divisiveness of the westward expansion kept them from all out praise of it. "Puritanism, the Wilderness and the Frontier," The New England Quarterly, XXVI (1953), pp. 361-382.

organic fabric of society: covetousness (seeking the self over the common good), faction, and contentions, especially that "spiritual pride" that caused inferior to resist their superiors. "A going aside to make a party" and "Disturbance of unity" Winthrop called "sedition" and promptly banished the Antinomians to Rhode Island as seditionists.[24] That was a remedy reserved for extreme cases; the real cure for all divisiveness, economic and political, William Hubbard reminded the Massachusetts General Court in 1676, was a renewal of christian charity:

> . . . Could we but get our hearts stored with this Christian virtue, it would prove as a Balm out of Gilead, a sovereign remedy against all our troubles. This Grace of charity in the compleat and perfect exercise thereof would heal all our divisions, reform all our vices, root out all our disorders, make up all our breaches. . . . So for other Maladies and Distempers in our minds, or distresses in out outward Estates, charity would be like the Widows Oyle, that would never cease running till it had filled all the vessels.[25]

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[24] Charles Francis Adams ed., Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636-1638 (Boston: 1894), pp. 204-207, 214-216.

[25] William Hubbard, The Happiness of a People, pp. 61-62. *Cf*. Thomas Walley in the Plymouth election sermon of 1669. "If ever you would have Christ and his Wayes well thought of, labour after *Unity*; if you would have any more

New Englanders turned out to be a quarrelsome lot but they thought enough of love to make it the basis of their church and town covenants and to try to live by it, even if with mixed success. God did not expect regenerate men to cease sinning, only to want ~~to and to see the true~~ true nature of sin. "We are to *Hate* our *selves* and *ours* when they are contrary to *Christ,*" Thomas Hooker had written, and his readers managed to turn self-hate into an art form, denouncing their own failings with staggering eloquence. They were not really anymore sinful than other men, though they delighted to claim they were; they were only more conscious of the extent and ugliness of their sins.[26]

Converted by the Preaching of the Gospel, labour after *Unity*; if you would enjoy your Church-Priviledges, and your Civil Peace, labour for *Unity*; if you would have God remove his frowns, his afflicting hand from us, labour after *Unity*; if ever you would be serviceable to Christ, and one to another, labour after *Unity*." But the colonists will get unity by "Keeping the Order God hath appointed" in *church and state*. *Balm in Gilead to Heal Sions Wounds* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1669), pp. 17-19.

[26] *Heautona Paramenos: or a Treatise of Self-Denyall*, p. 26. On the "Jeremiad" and its significance see *infra*, Chapter IV, pp. 234-246.

Just sinning at the same rate as other men was enough to put the settlers' love to a severe test. Given their insistence on voluntarism and their own confessedly imperfect natures, occasions for divisions were inevitable, especially when it came to settling matters of religion or land distributions. Each dispute, each instance of contention brought forth from society fresh exclamations of outrage, fresh claims to be scandalized at the lack of communism , fresh lamentations over the decay of the ideals on which the colonies were founded. No one seemed to appreciate the fact that their very cries that New England had lost its original values testified to the values' continuing vitality. To practice completely as they preached the Puritans would have had to have been something more than human--or something less. They paid their standards honor enough in condemning themselves every time they fell short of them.

Indeed, the Puritans were too attached to unity ever to be able to achieve it. Often enough the need for unity itself encouraged the hated geographical fragmentation which violated it because Puritan society could maintain its homogeneity only by the expulsion or withdrawal of dissidents into some more of the previously uninhabited territories in which the New World so plentifully abounded. The settlement of Rhode Island by Gortonists, Hutchinsonians and followers of Roger Williams, all of them exiles from the Bay Colony, is a familiar story, but the same fissiparous tendencies occurred on the local town level for reasons more mundane than disagreement over God's free grace or the nature of the trinity. If a large minority of the townspeople of Sudbury in 1655 opposed a more liberal system of land distribution, its proponents would remove and found Marlborough eight miles away. Both parties were "united" after that and both remained under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts Bay, but the covenant that bound them together as townsmen had been rent and two towns stood where one had before.[27]

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[27] Sumner C. Powell, Puritan Village, pp. 169-170. "Once again, the children of Israel were on the march" seems rather an overstatement for a removal of eight miles. The move from Sudbury to Marlborough was less a migration than the simple fission of the parent body into two new ones in close proximity to each other. Interestingly, a council of nearby ministers unsuccessfully attempted to intervene in the Sudbury dispute in 1655 in order to determine "such further course . . . as

Love could and did justify conciliation as well as separation, and unity could be achieved through inclusion as well as exclusion. By the end of the seventeenth century many men were actually arguing for religious toleration on the basis of charity, which "makes us not only love God, but those whom God loves; he that loves him that begat, loves him also that is begotten, because he is a son of God, not because he is of the same opinions, or that this or that quality in him is pleasing."[28] Even in the first generation the mature and perceptive Winthrop sometimes convinced his fellow magistrates to give in to the people on disputed points, though still convinced of their own correctness, because this would preserve unity.[29] But from the first

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may most conduce to the Glory of God and the Unity of their hearts to Unity in truth and praier, according to the rule of the Gospel." Ibid., pp. 166-169.

[28] Daniel Dennison, Irenicon, p. 211. Cf. John Oxenbridge, New England's Freemen Warmed and Warned (Cambridge, Mass.: 1673), pp. 37-38; Cotton Mather, The Way to Prosperity, printed with The Wonderful Works of God (Boston: 1690), pp. 30, 32.

[29] Cf. infra, Chapter III, p. 174, nt. 60.

the Puritans tended to identify love and exclusiveness, to avoid disunity simply by eliminating or excluding all potentially divisive members. The first two terms of the Dedham town covenant of 1636 stood in a significant conjunction that might have served as the program of the whole Bay Colony:

> 1 We whose names are here unto subscribed do in the feare and Reverence of our All mightie God, mutually: and severally promise amongst our selves, and each to other to professe and practice one trueth according to that most perfect rule. the foundacion where of is Everlasting Love:
>
> 2 That we shall by all meanes Laboure to keepe of[f] from us all such as are contrarye minded. And receave onely such unto us as be such as may be probably of one harte, with us as that we either knowe or may well and truely be informed to walke in a peaceable conversation with all meekenes of spirit for the edification of each other in the knowledg and faith of the Lord Jesus: And the mutuall encouragement unto all Temporall comforts in all things: seeking the good of each other out of all which may be derived true peace[.] [30]

It is nowhere recorded that anyone realized that this statement sounded inappropriate in the mouths of men who refused to separate from the Church of England for fear of breaking charity and who justified their coming to the New World on the grounds that they would provide a beacon and a model for all men in the Old. As time progressed and fewer people could claim an experience of saving grace and the privileges that went with it, "love" came more and more to be a tribal devotion to the offspring of the elect only, and unity the preservation of their purity without reference to the rest of mankind. When Thomas Shephard denounced religious diversity in 1648 and declared that "I would not have a godly man to go into the company of an erroneous person; his words are infectious,"[31] he failed to see that in keeping the godly joined together in orthodoxy he simultaneously broke their ties to humanity.

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[30] Dedham Records, III, 2. Nathaniel Ward defended Ipswich's policy of exclusion in 1635 on the grounds that in their isolated condition the settlers "had need to be strong and of a homageneous spirit and people, as free from dangerous persons as we may." Winthrop Papers, III, 216.

This feature of "tribalism" has received considerable attention elsewhere,[32] but it had another sometimes neglected aspect, even uglier though less obvious. Not only were the members of the tribe the only legitimate objects of love, but they remained so only so long as they kept strictly to its rules--once expelled, their former brethren regarded them with a hate stronger than any feeling they had towards the mixed multitude who had never shared in the privileges of the elect in the first place. John Winthrop, more moderate than most, could invoke the rule of mercy in 1643 to justify aid to the French Catholic La Tour in his struggle against his rival governor of Acadia, D'Aulnay, but he denied that the same rule applied to suspected Antinomians in 1637. "A man is not a fit object of mercy except he be in miserye" and a Catholic nobleman with a fleet and soldiers was somehow in more misery than an Antinomian immigrant desiring permanent residence in Massachusetts.[33]

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[31] Wine for Gospel Wantons (Boston: 1668), pp. 8-11, 14.

[32] Edmund S. Morgan named the phenomenon "tribalism" and delineated its symptoms, an abandonment of evangelical fervor for an exclusive devotion to the offspring of the elect, in The Puritan Family, pp. 90-104.

The Antinomian crisis of 1637-8 displayed the concept of love at its best and worst, before it became totally corrupted. In the name of love the orthodox majority of the Bay colony at first tried to accommodate the heretical minority and only reluctantly made up its mind to cast them out; but once the Antinomians were outside the tribal bond the orthodox turned on them with a fury approaching outright sadism. The General Court convicted the Antinomian leader John Wheelright, brother-in-law of Anne Hutchinson, of sedition in May, 1637, but deferred sentence, "having now power enough to have crushed them [the Antinomians], [so that] their moderation and desire of reconcilliation might appear to all." The same session of the Court passed the order "to keep out all such persons as might be dangerous to the commonwealth" but allowed Winthrop to administer it very liberally.

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[33] Winthrop Jl., II, 136-7; "A Declaration in Defense of an Order of Court Made in May, 1637," Winthrop Papers, III, 424.

By July Winthrop was writing in his Journal that "the differing grew so much here, as tended fast to a separation," and when a Synod convened on August 30th managed to squeeze into line John Cotton, whose theology the Antinominas claimed to follow, the orthodox party found it had gone as far towards comprehension as it could. Wheelright's party continuing obstinate despite their having been (in Winthrop's opinion) "clearly confuted and confounded" in the August synod, the General Court on November 2, 1637 "finding upon consultation that two so opposite parties could not contain in the body, without apparent hazard of ruin to the whole, agreed to send away some of the principal." The Antinomian leaders and their most ardent followers were ejected from the Bay Colony, the Boston Church first excommunicating their prophetess, Anne Hutchinson.[34]

After the expulsion of the Hutchinsonians Winthrop eagerly collected information on their subsequent misfortunes, giving over several pages of his journal to detailed descriptions of the monstrous children born to Anne Hutchinson and to one of her followers, Mary Dyer, as the Almighty's confirmation of the monstrousness of the two women's heresies.[35] Back on October 31, 1636, when affairs were still being carried "lovingly" in the Boston Church,

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[34] Winthrop Jl., I, 265, 267, 278, 277, 291-92.

[35] Ibid., I, 313-17, 326-28. The fact that Mrs. Hutchinson later ran afoul of some Indians in Westchester County, New York and had her head bashed in was received with considerable jubilation by the orthodox. The Rev. Thomas Welde wrote that "Gods hand is the more apparently seene herein, to pick out this wofull woman, to make here and those belonging to her an unheard of heavie example of their cruelty above all others." Charles F. Adams ed., Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, pp. 93-94.

Winthrop addressed John Wheelright, his fellow church member, as "brother" and "professed that he did love that brother's person, and did honor the gifts and graces of God in him."[36] But if Wheelright was Winthrop's brother, Mary Dyer was his sister. She had become a member of the Boston Church in 1635 and despite her removal to Rhode Island in 1638, the church held the ties of love still bound her and never dismissed or excommunicated her,[37] not even in 1660 when she was hanged on Boston Common as a Quakeress. The contradictory behavior did not make Winthrop a hypocrite: his feelings were real, both his love for Wheelright in 1636 and his deep satisfaction at Mary Dyer's monstrous birth in 1638. During the year and a half between the two journal entries the Antinomians had ceased to be erring members of the tribe, worthy of conciliation, and become rebels against it, to be cast out and exposed to Jehovah's vengeance.

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[36] Winthrop Jl., I, 241-2.

[37] For Mary Dyer's admission to the Boston Church see The Records of the First Church in Boston 1630-1868, Publ. CSM (ed. Richard D. Pierce; Boston: 1961), XXXIX, 90. The church records do not show any trace of a sentence of excommunication on her. She was certainly still considered a member in 1639 when the church sent messengers up to Rhode Island to inquire into what it considered questionable behavior on the part of individuals it still considered bound to them by covenant in the ties of love. One of the Antinomians, Francis Hutchinson, even sent a letter requesting a formal dismission and was denied on the grounds that there was no church to dismiss him too. In 1645 on hearing that one Rhode Island exile was accused of adultery the church sent for him and excommunicated him when he naturally failed to come. Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p. 155. When John Winthrop exulted in Mary Dyer's monstrous child he was as formally bound to mourn and rejoice with her as with Wheelright.

Individuals of the most varied religious persuasions in the seventeenth century shared the tendency to see their enemies' misfortunes as divine judgments, but it took Winthrop to identify his enemies' sins with crimes against the tribe and to record their punishments in his diary as proof of "the presence and power of God in his ordinances, and his blessing upon his people, while they endeavor to walk before him with uprightness."[38] He did not even restrict the Lord's wrath towards the enemies of his people to outright religious heretics and profane scoffers. Also subject to deserved overthrow were "others, though godly, who have spoken ill of this country, and discouraged the hearts of his people." John Humphrey was one of the original members of the Massachusetts Bay Company and a magistrate from his arrival in Massachusetts in 1634 until his removal in 1641, but because he left God's people when they needed him and advocated abandoning New England for Providence Isle, the Lord punished him: he suffered great financial hardships, one of his daughters went mad and two others, both under ten, were discovered to have been repeatedly "abused by divers persons." That satisfied God and Winthrop as far as Humphrey went, but similar misfortunes befell others who deserted New England "upon like grounds." Such people earned their fates in Winthrop's view because they violated the tribal bond:

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[38] Winthrop Jl., I, 387. Winthrop was talking about some remarkable prodigies "discovering hypocrites and other lewd persons, and bringing them their deserved punishment." He tended to reserve his greatest wrath not for outright sinners or even heretics, but those within the tribe who were secretly hostile to it.

> For such as come together into a wilderness, where are nothing but wild beasts and beast-like men, and there confederate together in civil and church estate, whereby they do implicitly at least, bind themselves to support of each other, and all of them that society, whether civil or sacred, whereof they are members, how they can break from this without free consent, is hard

> to find, so as may satisfy a tender or good conscience in time of trial.[39]

The New England Puritans' inclinations to identify themselves with the Israel of the Old Testament aided in in the development of tribal thinking, especially as the size of the tribe dwindled with the passing of the first generation and the coming to maturity of a second far less disposed to see in itself the workings of saving grace. Puritans realized that external pressure brought internal coherence centuries before sociologists announced it, and used their knowledge to strengthen the internal bond, love.[40]

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[39] *Ibid.*, II, 13-16, 104-5. *Cf*. Winthrop's comments on the fate of Capt. Daniel Patrick, who also deserted the Lord's people for profit. II, 182. Winthrop always connected an individual's overthrow not merely with his particular wickedness, but with God's love to His people. He recorded such things in his journal he wrote, "so that it will appear how the Lord hath owned this work and preserved and prospered his people here beyond ordinary ways of providence." *Jl*., II, 13.

[40] The Rev. John Higginson of Salem wrote Winthrop about the Pequot War in May, 1637: ". . . whether now the Lord begins not to send (as shephards use to doe their dogs to fetch in their [redacted] sheep so he) the Indians upon his servants, to make them cleave more close togither, and prize each other, to prevent contention of Brethren which may prove as hard to break as Castle barres, and stop their now beginning breaches before they be as the letting out of many waters that cannot be gathered in againe, etc." *Winthrop Papers*, I, 404.

Even Winthrop in his Model of Christian Charity had spoken of New Englanders as united through a "Community of perill" because the stakes in their ventures were so high, the potential rewards and punishments so great, they must be knit together as one man in their work if they were to avoid the most appalling calamities.[41] Later writers inclined to build the Community by emphasizing the Peril, quickly converting New England from the promised land to the wilderness where the twelve tribes must wander until purged of worldliness and united together in the Lord's work: "God in his infinite wisdom did train them up to encounter with Marches and Journeyings in the Wilderness, and then acquainted them with the difficulties of a long War, that they might learn obedience, by what they underwent."[42]

When William Hubbard delivered his Happiness of a People to the assembled freemen, magistrates and deputies of Massachusetts on election day in 1676 the country was well acquainted with the difficulties of a long war, the massive Indian uprising of King Phillip, and Hubbard played the analogy to the hilt. He took as his ideal only one of the twelve tribes, Issachar, which he considered particularly outstanding for its order and unity. The brethren elected their wisest men as "Heads" and then followed them loyally: "Guidance belongs to their Leaders, Obedience to their followers, whose wisdome it is to obey rather than dispute the commands of their Superiors." Issachar in Hubbard's description came out as united, militarized, spirited, tough, disciplined and hierarchical, the tribe David could most depend on for his wars. Hubbard's sermon included the paens to order quoted in the preceding chapter, but like Winthrop in the Model, the pastor of Ipswich waived any appeal to a natural order comprehendible to the reason: Issachar did not learn its good order from a prudent observation of the seasons and "God in nature"; rather, they became exemplary through "long experience of the calamities and service of Warr."[43] If New England would have the virtues of Issachar, Hubbard explained at the end of the sermon, it must cultivate Christian charity and the good order that went with it.[44] The Community of Peril had reached its ultimate development: agape had become a military virtue, the tie that unites Israel's King and Israel's people in the fear-induced discipline necessary to control a hostile population of Philistines.

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[41] Ibid., II, 293-5.

[42] William Hubbard, The Benefit of a Well-Ordered Conversation, pp. 53-54. Cf. Allen Heimert, "Puritanism, the Wilderness and the Frontier," pp. 361-62.

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[43] Pp. 1-7, passim.

The wars of the lord could not last forever: even the children of Israel entered Canaan after forty years in the wilderness. All the military analogies, all the perils of New England life, all the instances of God's condign punishment of apostates could not stop the number of church members from falling to the point where the larger part of society ceased to be under the moral obligations of regenerate love. Then it became necessary to reinvoke order and to remind men of the rule of justice Winthrop had so casually omitted in 1630. But order in the eighteenth century was a far different thing than in the seventeenth. Massachusetts' charter, the foundation of its holy commonwealth, had fallen in 1685 with the inauguration of royal government in the colony under the short lived Dominion of New England. A local version of the Glorious Revolution overthrew the Dominion in 1689, but the new charter Massachusetts received three years later saddled the colony with a royal governor and required religious toleration at the same time as a new suffrage law substituted a simple property qualification for the old requirement of church membership as the prerequisite for freemanship. Except for Plymouth, merged with the Bay Colony under the 1692 Charter, the other New England colonies simply resumed the charters the Dominion had suspended in 1685, but all of them while still willing to assist the congregational ministry and enforce the community's standards of morality could not and eventually would not cooperate as closely with the church in establishing the Puritan social ideal as they had before the imperial government took a hand in colonial affairs in 1685.[45]

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[44] It was to purge New England of its divisions and to bring about love and unity that God sent the war: "He uses to sit as a Refiner over his fire. And when he hath prepared the Soyle by ploughing and harrowing he will cast in the Precious Seed. . . . God doth not at any time willingly afflict the Children of men, but at no time over afflict them." P. 60.

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45. These changes in the New England mentality that

No longer certain of their ability to call on the power of the state, Puritan thinkers had to construct a variety of new, voluntary institutions to take the place of coercive legal power in enforcing social discipline. Of all those who applied themselves to the problem, Solomon Stoddard, minister of Northampton, proved the most thoroughgoing: since the requirement of actually having experienced saving grace kept most men from coming to full communion, and thereby from being subject either to the duties of love or to church discipline, the solution lay in dropping the requirement by redefining the sacrament as a saving ordinance rather than as the seal of conversion only. All but the most reprobate could then be taken into the bosom of the church. Once inside, subject to its discipline and exhortation and to a minister whose administration of the Lord's Supper gave him the keys to heaven, the new members probably discovered that ecclesiastical order did not differ much

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that took place after 1685 form the subject of Perry Miller's The New England Mind, From Colony to Province (Boston: 1961), Chapters XI-XXVIII. The final section of this chapter is heavily indebted to this book, especially to the discussions of Stoddard and Mather in chapters XV and XXIV.

from civil: "A church is not a confused body of people, but they are brought into order, and each one must observe his proper station: It is compared to a natural body, wherein there are divers organs appointed to their peculiar services." Stoddard also compared it to an army.[46]

"Stoddardeanism," opening the communion service to all, prevailed in the Connecticut River Valley, where its author's personality made itself felt, but Eastern Massachusetts under the leadership of Increase and Cotton Mather rejected the western innovations. Cotton Mather was prepared to go part way with Stoddard for all the fury with which he and his father denounced the minister of Northampton. He advocated admitting individuals who were free of scandal and willing to "own" the church covenant into a half-way membership where they could secure baptism for themselves and their children and would be subject to church discipline, but he still denied them the right to come to the Lord's Supper without the traditional requirement of saving grace.[47] Yet at the same time he tried to make it easier for his congregations to have the requisite experience by emphasizing the part their own efforts played in the process.[48]

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[46] Solomon Stoddard, The Way for a People to Live Long in the Land that God hath given them (Boston: 1703), pp. 4-5.

Mather's main labours for social regulation lay outside the church entirely in the creation of purely secular organizations independent of either civil or ecclesiastical authorities though cooperating with both. The need to increase good works in Mather's view justified such a step. For all their insistence on salvation by faith alone, Puritans had never sleighted good works, but Mather carried the exhortation to do good, as he carried most things, to extremes:

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[47] For Mather's stand on this question see Mather Papers, 4 Coll. MHS, VIII, 397-401. This should not be confused with the Half-Way Covenant, which extended only to the children of parents already baptised and themselves the children of church members. Over the opposition of some of the leading members of his church Mather wanted to extend half-way privileges to all professing adults living a godly life.

[48] ". . . if men did in Religion more than they do, & All that they could by a Natural Power do, there would be a greater likelihood (I say not, a Certainty, but a Likelihood,) that God would grant them that Higher Power; they would be much more in the likely way, of Coming to a Saviour." A Conquest over the Grand Excuse of Sinfulness and Slothfulness (Boston: 1712), pp. 28-29. Perry Miller traces the history of this "rationalistic" trend in Puritanism in The New England Mind, From Colony to Province, pp. 53-67.

> Tho' the Assertion fly never so much like a Chain Shot among us, and Rake down all before it, I Will again Assert it; That we might every One of us do more Good than we do. And therefore, This is the FIRST PROPOSAL, to be made unto us; To be Exceedingly Humbled, that we have done so Little Good in the World.[49]

The best way to do good was to do it together in an organized fashion through various appropriate community organizations, many of which Mather actually helped found. Lawyers, doctors and others could form professional associations to aid good works in the course of their callings: physicians by taking advantage of their position to advise their wealthy or powerful patients to do good and their poor ones to repent, lawyers by prodding their wealthy clients to leave money for pious uses in their wills, landlords by requiring their tenants read the Bible and hold family worship as terms of their leases.[50] For the better governing of individual neighborhoods Mather recommended the establishment of local, voluntary "Reforming-Societies" which should each include at least one minister and one justice of the peace as members. Modeled on the English Societies for the Reformation of Manners, these organizations and similar Young Men's Associations for the voluntary ordering of youth could admonish scandalous and contentious individuals, advise the ministers about special services to religion and the J.P.'s on "the further Promoting of Good Order," make sure local church and civil officers performed their duties, uncover "Oppression or Fraudulence, in the Dealings of any sort of people," humbly suggest laws for public benefit, and succor those under sore affliction by giving charity to the poor, medicine to the sick and comfort to the bereaved.[51]

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[49] Bonifacius (Boston: 1710), p. 24.

[50] Ibid., pp. 128, 133, 147, 164.

The functions and methods of these proposed organizations had a familiar ring to them, and when it came to their internal organization the resemblance to the churches became explicit. If any one of the membership fell "into a *Scandalous* Iniquity," the association should first admonish him and then if he failed to repent cast him out "until he bring Suitable Expressions and Evidences of *Repentance* with him."[52] Once every four months the associatimn would go over the membership rolls and similarly discipline habitual absentees. That marked the difference between Stoddard and Mather: the former's church sounded like the older conception of civil society, and the latter's civil societies sounded like the older conception of the church.

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[51] Ibid., pp.1[illegible]. Mather was very active in organizing and directing the activities of his three Boston societies for the reformation of manners. See his Diary, I, 418, 500, 517. Nothing if not methodical, Mather prepared a "Catalogue of Young Men, who visit wicked houses" for the benefit of the societies so that they might send the young men written admonitions, and he also made up a "List of the wicked Houses in the Town." Diary, II, 160.

Mather had chosen to replace both minister and magistrate by the P.T.A., by voluntary associations exercising coercive power through the force of public opinion only. To modern sensibilities this program may seem a continuous incitement to busybodyism, one more unpleasant feature of a throughly unpleasant man who lived his life in italics and whose ideal of literary style was the exclamation point. Yet for all his incredible bathos Mather at least did something few Puritans before him had even attempted: he said something

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52. *Bonifacius,* pp. 85-88.

to the mixed multitude. He may have kept the unregenerate out of full membership in the church but at least he brought them back into society. Perhaps he had to at a time when church membership had ceased to be a requirement for the franchise and when most males, voters and otherwise, did not think themselves qualified for full communion. Whatever his motives, when he talked of love he did not restrict it to the elect. His neighborhood reforming societies, he wrote, in the midst of their minding of each other's business "should Look upon themselves, as bound up in one Bundle of Love; and count themselves obliged, in very Close and Strong Bonds to be serviceable to one another."[53]

Thanks to Mather and Stoddard and to general human inertia, men could still be convinced to acknowledge their natural inequality as a basic part of the cosmic order and forced back into line if they ever forgot that fact. But Stoddard had destroyed the principle of voluntarism in both church and state, replacing the covenants by exercises of naked power, and Mather in his own devious way had also wrought the older ideals a fatal blow by substituting a flaccid moralism for the intensity of the Augustinian piety

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53. Ibid., pp. 82-85.

that had originally given Puritanism its energy and strength. One concept of love had founded New England and another had nearly wrecked its ecclesiastical and social system. In the name of a charity extending at least to all Christendom Winthrop and his followers had founded New England to reform a benighted world through the force of their example. Yet they built the society that would serve as a vital part of that example on a charity defined so narrowly it restricted the bonds of love to the regenerate and then insisted on identifying even them with the ever-dwindling number of New Englanders who could supply clear proof of a work of saving grace on their souls. Ultimately, by their own standards the Puritans failed to convert the world because they failed to convert even themselves.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL: THE GOOD RULER

Whether based on order or love, human society viewed through Puritan eyes turned into an organic union among men created unequal. Differences between men existed everywhere: in riches, in birth, in intellect and gifts, and most importantly in power. No set of "relative duties" received as much attention as that between political superior and inferior, between ruler and ruled.[1]

By turning the fifth commandment, "Honor thy father and mother" into "obey thy Governors" through use of the rhetorical device of synecdoche, Puritan exegeticists gave government the status of a divine command and rulers the right to claim their power from God. Yet so orthodox a minister as John Cotton could write of "the people, in whom fundamentally all power lyes"[2] and not feel heretical.

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[1] On relative duties _cf_. Chapter I _supra_., pp. 68-74.

[2] _An exposition upon the 13th Chapter of the Revelation_ (London: 1656), quoted in Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson ed., _The Puritans,_ I, 213.

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That paradoxical being, the Puritan God, though omnipotent and fully capable of accomplishing his ends "immediately" (directly), chose out of his mere grace and free will to limit himself and make his actions intelligible to mortals by acting "mediately" or by way of means.

God could have established government and governors directly and immediately, but instead He decided to work through men. Together with saving grace the regenerate received the inclination to live under government; they joined together in social covenants in order to establish civil societies and to choose the men who would run them. Only the office of ruler came by way of divine command. The form of that office and the choice of man to fill it lay at the discretion of the people.

A people, however, could not set up any government they found convenient -- its powers and ends had to conform to the purposes for which God had established all Government, and its rulers had to meet the standards He set. Men founded a government by contract, but God wrote the terms. When the people of Connecticut actually were founding a government, in 1638, Thomas Hooker reminded them of this point:

> Doctrine. I. That the choice of public magistrates belongs unto the people by God's own allowance.
>
> II. The privilege of election, which belongs to the people, therefore must not be exercised according to their humors, but according to the blessed will and law of God. [3]

In both Connecticut and Massachusetts election sermon after election sermon for over a century outlined in detail exactly what the blessed will and law of God prescribed. The ruler should not typify the people who elected him but the God whose deputy he became. He must be better than his constituents, a man able to promote public peace, prosperity and godliness by virtue of his wisdom, learning, piety and religious orthodoxy, courage, integrity and, above all, his public spirit -- "one who prefers the publick Benefit above all private men and separate Interests whatsoever." [4] William Hubbard gave his description under seven heads in 1676: piety and grace, "humane learning," constancy, moderation, peaceableness (the ability to avoid contention), "condesencion" (humility, a willingness to yield on non-essentials), and deliberation. By "humane learning" Hubbard meant intelligence, education and experience. "Such as by the benefit of natural parts, Experience, Education, and Study, have advantage above others to be acquainted with the affairs of the world abroad, as well as with the Laws and Customes of their own people at home."[5]

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[3] Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society, I, 20.

[4] Samuel Willard, The Character of a Good Ruler (Boston: 1694), pp. 8-13. *Cf*. Increase Mather, The Excellency of a Publick Spirit (Boston: 1702), pp. 2-11.

Hubbard's emphasis on the good ruler's moderate and amiable disposition may seem surprising at first, but it typified Puritan thought on the subject. While the actual New England magistrates sometimes displayed a tendency towards strictness and rigidity so pronounced they seemed more concerned about testifying to their own personal righteousness than about governing a colony, the magistrate of the Puritan ideal had just the opposite qualities. Cotton Mather could think of nothing worth greater praise in his idealized characterization of John Winthrop than the governor's ability to temper resolution with condescension and "MODERATION."

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[5] The Happiness of a People, pp. 27-33. Perry Miller has argued that after 1660 Puritan theorists laid increasing stress on education as a qualification for political leadership in reaction to the illiterate democracy and revivalism of the colony's spreading frontiers. That is possible, but difficult to prove: none of the election sermons before 1660 have survived, with one exception. Miller and Johnson, The Puritans, I, 17-18.

> Indeed such was the mixture of distant qualities in him, as to make a most admirable temper; and his having a certain greatness of soul, which rendered him grave, generous, courageous, resolved, well-applied, and every way a gentleman in his demeanour, did not hinder him from taking sometimes the old Roman's way to avoid confusions, namely *Cedendo* [By yielding the point]. [6]

On one subject the magistrate should not be moderate: he must be "a hater of covetousness," which John Oxenbridge described as "an earnest intentiveness upon wealth and increase of estate." Oxenbridge added grimly:

> Magistry is not . . . a trading and merchandize but a Ministry, he that dispiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of

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[6] *Magnalia Christi Americana* (Hartford: 1855), I, 128-9. "He was indeed a governour, who had most exactly studied that book which, pretending to teach politicks, did contain only three leaves, and but one word in each of these leaves, which word was MODERATION." *Ibid.*, I, 120.

> bribes . . . shall hold up his head when all the world is on fire, and such a fire seems kindling now. . . .[7]

Aside from these injunctions to avoid using public office as a means for private gain and to suppress covetousness among the people, the writers of election sermons paid very little attention to wealth before the opening of the eighteenth century. Not that a good ruler either could or should be poor; everyone simply assumed that any man elected to high public office would have to be rich to discharge his duties effectively.[8] As early as 1641, William Hawthorne, John Winthrop's most outspoken opponent in the lower house of the Massachusetts legislature, advocated removing Winthrop and another magistrate from their offices "because they were grown poor and spake reproachfully of them under that motion."[9]

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[7] New England's Freeman Warmed and Warned (Cambridge, Mass.: 1673), pp. 45-46. Cf. Thomas Bridge, Jethro's Advice Recommended to the Inhabitants of Boston, in New-England, viz. to Chuse Well-qualified Men, and Haters of Covetousness, for Town Officers (Boston: 1710).

[8] See, for example, Samuel Symonds' Letter to John Winthrop quoted supra, Chapter I, p. 76.

[9] Winthrop Jl., II, 67.

Only during the end of the seventeenth century and the opening of the eighteenth did the fear arise that the people might elect magistrates who were not already wealthy. Then it became necessary to remind the freemen that "persons Nominated for Councillors should be men of Estate and some Port in the World" or they would render government contemptible for lack of an "Estate to support the place and Dignity of a Ruler."[10]

Oddly enough most discussions of the character of a good ruler never mentioned the most basic single qualification for public office: superior social status.[11] High social rank and political power had been associated together so long there was no need to remind the people that they might choose as rulers only the better sort. The first generation of colonists elected to high office the same class of gentlemen who had made public service their exclusive prerogative in England; succeeding generations chose either these men's sons or men who had managed to attain the same social status by their own efforts in America.[11a]

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[10] Increase Mather, Primitive Counsellors, A Great Blessing (Boston: 1693), p. 19. John Barnard was even franker in arguing against appointing men "from the lowest of the People" to high office: "For the Common People (who have scarce any thing else to keep them at a Distance, and procure their Respect and Veneration, but the Impressions which outward Grandeur makes upon their Minds,) would be very apt to grow too familiar, and despise the Men, whom they find upon a Level with themselves, in their Capacity and Circumstances." The Throne Established by Righteousness (Boston: 1734), pp. 33-34.

[11] An exception is John Cotton who held it "more safe for the commonwealth to put the eminency of the honour and power rather in the hand of the magistracy than in the commonalty," and to the magistracy the people should "make choice of men of greatest worth for wisdom, for sufficiency, for birth." A Brief Exposition on Ecclesiastes (Edinburgh: 1868), p. 108.

The perfect New England magistrate turned out to be virtuous, prudent, religious, well-educated, wealthy, devoted to the common weal and preferably well born. Puritan speculation had combined _Exodus_ 18.20 with the _Nichomachean Ethics_ to produce a social ideal not very different from the contemporary English one, the country gentleman dedicated to public service,[12] though the Puritan ideal was possibly more austere and intensely religious. The real difference lay in the political systems in which the two functioned. An English gentleman in government either inherited his position or received it by commission from some higher power; even if he ran for parliament he usually had to appeal only to a comparatively select group of electors. In Massachusetts, even under the old charter (1630-1686) a much larger number of people not only could vote, but vote for all the main officers of government. If the number of elective officers narrowed under the new charter (1692-1774), the franchise widened considerably.[12a] Puritan theory assumed that the people would continue the customary English patterns of political deference towards their social superiors even though those superiors received the political power they held by right of birth and class in England, in

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[11a] If social status was high enough youth was no bar to public office. In 1636 Henry Vane was elected governor of Massachusetts Bay at the age of 24 because his father was comptroller of the King's household. Of the remaining thirteen magistrates in 1636, one other was in his twenties and four were in their thirties. Of those four, three had originally been elected while still in their twenties.

[12] A comprehensive survey of the contemporary English concept of gentleman is Ruth Kelso, _The Doctrine of_

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the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century (Urbana: 1929), Univ. of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, XIV (1929).

[12a] For the franchise under the new charter see Robert E. Brown, Middle Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780 (Ithaca, New York: 1955), pp. 21-52.

New England only through the suffrage of that very same people.

Somehow it worked. For more than a century the tradition of political leadership in Massachusetts remained aristocratic in the sense of rule by the best, a group of men selected for their moral and intellectual virtues, not their opinions. "Popularity," electing a man because he favored or opposed a given scheme, not only ignored the valid criteria for a leader, it breached the fifth commandment and invited divine retribution. Samuel Willard warned the freemen in 1694:

> When a people are divided into Factions; Just, and Wise, and good Men are renounced, & not thought worthy to be made use of, because they favor not the Party that can sway; and such as are hotly zealous for the design, are counted, mer[e]ly by that zeal sufficiently qualified, and to be of all men worthy; this will not promote the Public Good, but only gain to the one side a little more advantage to do hurt. [13]

Elections still had to take place every year, but no one thought of them as instruments for the enactment of the popular will. When a voter cast his ballot for a magistrate

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13. The Character of a Good Ruler, p. 24.

and an elected magistrate accepted office both signified their assent to a covenant, an agreement on the part of the freeman to yield obedience in return for government according to the laws of God. Only if the ruler broke the covenant by clearly violating God's law should the people remove him -- by voting him out where possible, by more drastic means when necessary. In this sense and no other a ruler was accountable to the people; though they elected him, he did not represent them. It was this system, not some form of representative democracy,[13a] that John Cotton meant by the word "aristocracy" in his famous letter to Lord Say and Seele:

> [Jean] Bodine confesseth, that though it be *status popularis,* where a people choose their owne governors; yet the government is not a democracy, if it be administered, not by the

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[13a] B. Katherine Brown argued in "A Note on the Puritan Concept of Aristocracy," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XLI (1954), 105-112, that Cotton and Winthrop's concepts resembled modern notions of democracy. That depends on what you take those modern notions to be. If democracy is taken to include some idea of representative government then I must disagree with Mrs. Brown.

> people, but by the governors, whether one (for then it is a monarchy, though elective) or by many, for then (as you know) it is aristocracy.[14]

Even for the Puritans "democracy" consisted not in popular election of the ruler alone, but in the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. By the time Cotton wrote his letter (1636) the Bay Colony did have an institution generally regarded as "democraticall":[14a] the deputies, elected four times a year to represent the freemen in the quarterly General Courts that made all laws for the colony after 1634. Since the magistrates also sat in the General Court, contemporaries described the system as "mixd" or a "mixd aristocracie," a fair enough name given their definition of terms.

> Our Civill Government is mixt: the freemen choose the magistrates everye yeare . . . and at 4 Courts in the yeare 3 out of each towne

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[14] Thomas Hutchinson, The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay, I, 416-17.

[14a] During a later political controversy Winthrop noted that both he and his opponent, Richard Saltonstall, agreed "that the Deputyes are the Democraticall parte of the Government." Winthrop Papers, IV, 383.

> (there being 8 in all) doe assist the magistrats in making of lawes, imposing taxes, and disposing of lands. . . .[15]

An anonymous "small treatise" of 1643, possibly written by John Norton, defined aristocracy as that system "where majesty or supreame civill power is committed by the people to the nobles or superior sort of the people as Gentry . . ." and democracy as a system in which the people committed "majesty" to "any sort of the people." The "present forme of government with us" the author called a mixture of aristocracy and democracy and endorsed the controversial theory that in order for the government to remain truly mixed not only must the people elect men both of the inferior and superior sort, but in addition neither sort must be able to act without the other.[16]

The idea of mixed government did not originate with the Puritans, nor did the theory of the origin of the state through a covenant, and they were hardly the first people to face the problem of the source of authority. Medieval and Tudor theorists would have found most of their thinking familiar.[17] But in Europe before 1630 most of these ideas and the controversies over them were literally academic, or at best they provided justification and some guidance for the contending sides in rivalries between already existing political institutions -- pope and emperor, king and parliament. The New World of 1630 by contrast was really new: the king with historically derived prerogatives and the parliament whose advocates could cite and miscite precedents going back to Edward I were both three thousand miles away. Aside from a few Indians America presented a total void in which a disciplined and talented people could create entirely new institutions in conformity to theories of church and state which had been elaborated and debated at length in the Old World, but which had never been tried before. For that very reason the details and even many of the ultimate implications of Puritan theory remained fluid and undetermined until given definition by the results of that theory in action. Winthrop explained it quite simply to that incorrigible precedent collector, Sir Simon D'Ewes:

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[15] John Winthrop to Sir Nathaniel Rich, 22 May 1634, Winthrop Papers, III, 167.

[16] Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, XLVI (1912-13), 280-281.

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[17] *Cf*. John B. Morrall, *Political Thought in Medieval Times* (New York: 1962), pp. 40, 78-9, 123-132. Reference is to the Harper Torchbook. J.W. Allen, *Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: 1957), pp. 247-270 *passim.*

> what you may doe in England where things are otherwise established, I will not dispute, but our case here is otherwise: being come to clearer light and more Libertye, which we trust by the good hand of our God with us, and the gratious indulgence of our Kinge, we may freely enjoye it. . . .[18]

The attempt to let the clearer light of Massachusetts dictate political organization began almost as soon as the main body of colonists landed. Winthrop defined a commonwealth as "the consent of a certaine companie of people, to cohabite together, under one government for their mutual safety and welfare,"[19] and such a commonwealth he intended to establish. Although his definition might have come straight out of Sir Thomas Smith's De Republica Anglorum,[20] there was one major difference. Queen Elizabeth's principal secretary of state never had the opportunity to establish a government on the principle of consent; John Winthrop, first governor of Massachusetts Bay, did.

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[18] July 21, 1634, Winthrop Papers, III, 172. John Cotton also distinguished between a commonwealth already settled and one first to be settled "wherein men are free to chuse what Form they shall judge best." A Discourse About Civil Government in a New Plantation whose Design is Religion (Cambridge, Mass.: 1663), pp. 9-11. Sometimes attributed to John Davenport.

[19] "A Declaration in Defense of an Order of Court Made in May, 1637," Winthrop Papers, III, 423.

The Charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company gave the governor, assistants and freemen of the company meeting in a General Court absolute authority over the government of the colony. Winthrop, Deputy Governor Thomas Dudley and the six assistants who had come over with them were also the only freemen of the company then in Massachusetts, so they could have ruled the colony as they pleased. Instead, on October 19, 1630, "For the establishinge of the government," Winthrop and the assistants threw open the freemanship, membership in the Company, to almost all the free adult males then in the colony. In return the freemen would elect their rulers, the assistants, once a year, and the rulers "should have the power of makeing lawes and chuseing officers to execute the same." When this "was fully assented unto by the generall vote of the people, and erreccion of hands," Massachusetts Bay had become a commonwealth with a government established on the principle of consent.[21] Myths of the Old World have a habit of coming true in the New.

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[20] "A common wealth is called a society or common doing of a multitude of free men collected together and united by common accord and covenauntes among themselves, for the conservation of themselves as well in peace as in warre." De Republica Anglorum, p. 20.

The General Court the following May established a requirement that all future freemen belong to one of the colony's churches,[22] but that did not drastically restrict the franchise: a majority of the men in the first generation were church members. Succeeding generations did not join a church so readily, and the extent of the franchise fell sharply as a result, although it always remained much larger than in England.[22a]

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[21] Mass. Rec., I, 79. Emphasis added. Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Dilemma (Boston: 1958), pp. 93-94. Reference is to the paperback.

[22] Ibid., I, 87.

[22a] See Appendix.

Yet by contemporary definitions Massachusetts was not a "democracy." Once a year the people elected their rulers, not their representatives. The same ten or eleven individuals who had filled the posts of "magistrates" (governor, deputy-governor and assistants) before the covenant of October, 1630 continued to fill those posts in subsequent years (with suitable additions from newly immigrated individuals of equally high social rank).[23] Massachusetts government for a time exhibited the paradox of a "popular aristocracy."

While the same men held office, however, the nature of their offices became a subject for heated controversy. Extension of the freemanship opened the way for fifteen years of spectacular political and constitutional conflict between freemen and magistrates which had obscured the solid basis of fundamental social assumptions they held in common. No one had ever founded a government like Massachusetts before; its real meaning had to be worked out through years of experimentation. Tension and contradiction within a shared political ideology had somehow to be resolved within the very frame of government itself. Massachusetts did not suffer a wilderness version of the English Civil War only because magistrates and people agreed on most major articles of political faith and came into conflict only over their application.[24]

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[23] The complete list of the governor and assistants of Massachusetts Bay under the old charter are in William H. Whitmore, The Massachusetts Civil Lists for the Colonial and Provincial Periods, 1630-1774 (Albany: 1870), pp. 16-17, 21-26.

The first real clash came in 1634. In that year representatives of the freemen requested a look at the Company charter and discovered that it gave the governor and assistants only vague supervisory powers between meetings of the General Court. That body and that body alone, consisting of governor, assistants and all the freemen had the sole and exclusive power under the charter to enact laws, appoint officers and admit new freemen. On May 14, 1634, the general court voted to resume its charter powers, changing the colony by consequence from a pure aristocracy into a mixed aristocracy: the rule of the magistrates would be tempered by their having to join with the freemen four times a year in order to make laws.[25]

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[24] The story of this conflict has been told often and sometimes well, and I do not intend to retell it, except in so far as the constitutional conflicts relate to the problem of the application of Puritan concepts of social class to the Massachusetts political system. However, a good summary of the issues involved is George L. Haskins, Law and Authority in Early Massachusetts (New York: 1960), pp. 25-42.

By "freemen" the charter had contemplated the limited body of stockholders of a trading company, not the thousand strong citizens of a commonwealth the term denoted in 1634. Because of the sheer impossibility of a body so numerous functioning as a legislative assembly the freemen invented a device whose function they understood clearly but which has confused some later historians: the deputies.

Even in the seventeenth century the word deputy meant an individual delegated by another to take his place and exercise his function.[26] There would be no ambiguities about the origins of the deputies' power: the order establishing them stated that they "shall have the full power and voyces of all the said freemen, deryved [i.e., transferred] to them."[27] Winthrop stated that "in their first institution they were appointed as the representative body of the Freemen,"[27a] and during a later political controversy he wrote of their power:

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[25] Mass. Rec., I, 117.

[26] Lord Kensington wrote in 1624: "But this case is now different, sayd she, for there the Prince was in Person, heer is but his deputy. But a Deputy, answerd I, that represents his person." Quoted in The Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: 1961), III, 224, col. I.

[27] Mass. Rec., I, 118-19.

> If it be in the Deputyes it is in the people . . . for they are but the representative body of the people, and the matter lyes not in the number Assembled, but in their power: Againe the people are not bounde to send their Deputyes [to the general court] but they may come themselves, if they will.[28]

The deputies were not magistrates nor rulers; when they sat in the general court they were the body of freemen incarnate.[28a]

[27a] *Winthrop Papers,* IV, 359.

[28] "Defense of the Negative Voice," *Winthrop Papers,* IV, 382-3.

[28a] In 1679 Boston in its instructions to its deputies used the representative nature of the institution to demand "That we may have Duputies in the General Court, proportionable to our Nomber of Freemen at least to our Nomber of Churches," instead of sending only two deputies as every other town that had over twenty freemen did. The instructions contended that the freemen of Boston suffered from rural overrepresentation because although the charter allowed each freeman an equal voice in the general court, and the deputies had been created to represent all the freemen, yet "By our Lawes every Deputie in Generall Court represents but 10 Freemen because every Towne that have above 10 Freemen may send a Deputie and every towne that have 20 may send 2 Deputies (& noe Towne more than two) soe that all the freemen in each Towne more

Superficial similarities between magistrates and deputies should not lead to a confusion of their functions. The freemen did elect both, the magistrates at large, the deputies by towns. Both did serve in the general court, which functioned as the colony's legislature and supreme judicial tribunal. But there the resemblance ended: the magistrates remained a select ruling council of the wise and virtuous not accountable to electorate. The deputies by comparison were a mechanical convenience for transmitting the freemen's wishes. Winthrop explained in 1642 that "our magistrates doe represent the Authoritye of all the people as well as the deputyes doe that power and Libertye which they [the people] have reserved to themselves."[29]

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than 20 have noe vote in the General Court, neither by themselves or any representative." Boston Rec., VII, 134.

[29] Ibid., IV, 387. Here neither Winthrop nor Puritan theory was completely consistent. He seems to be saying that even the magistrates' authority comes from the delegation of powers originally residing in the people. At other times he would argue that their authority came directly from God, the people only choosing the men who would exercise it. *Cf*. John Bulkley: "In Elective States, where Persons

The order creating the deputies indicated both the degree of conflict between freemen and magistrates and the extent to which they agreed on fundamental ideas. If the freemen had not recognized the magistrates' claim to be a non-representative body of superiors, they would not have needed deputies in the first place. They could simply have voted magistrates not conforming to their wishes out of office. Instead, while the old charter lasted the freemen refrained from making any major changes in the composition of the magistrates, even during the stormiest conflicts between the two groups.

Those conflicts centered largely around the nature and power of the magistrate's office. The freemen opposed Winthrop's contention that the magistrates had absolute legislative, executive and judicial powers limited only by the moral restrictions of their oath of office and the covenants of their churches, and by the word of God as

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are Advanc'd by the Suffrage of others to Places of Rule, and Vested with Civil Power, the Persons Chusing give not the Power, but GOD. They are but the Instruments of Conveyance, and do but Design the Persons that shall receive it from Him." The Necessity of Religion (New London: 1713), p. 14.

interpreted by themselves with occasional advice from the ministers. They tried to establish clear limits on the magistrates' power, first by instituting the deputies and later by denying the magistrates' claim to a legislative veto and their claims to life tenure, by attacking the independence of their executive functions, and by insisting on a written code of laws with fixed penalties as the basis of judicial decisions. Most of the time the magistrates won, but with only one exception neither freemen nor the deputies ever attempted to limit the magisterial office by controlling the men in it. By 1645 when the political system finally gained a degree of stability, years of controversy had gone a long way towards resolving the problem of maintaining the political power of a socially superior class within the framework of an elective state.

At the very court that established the deputies the issue of life tenure came up in dramatic fashion. John Cotton, preaching the election sermon, chose that moment to announce that the magistrate had a property right to his office and ought never to loose it, except for gross wickedness. The freemen reacted by relegating John Winthrop, who had served as governor for the previous four terms, to the rank of assistant, replacing him with Deputy Governor Thomas Dudley.[30] Israel Stoughton, a leading deputy, wrote his brother not long after that "we desire to change yeare by yeare the governourship: but the assistants more rarely, yet sometimes least it be esteemed hereditary."[31]

The clause about the assistants proved nothing more than a pious hope, but the ministers (Cotton excepted) also favored a rotating governorship and even opposed the very idea of a governor distinct in power from the other magistrates. They repeatedly "laboured" to see that Winthrop did not serve more than one term in the governorship at a time, though the freemen left to their own devices would have re-elected him to that office almost every year.[32]

Life tenure for magistrates in general received more sympathy from the ministry. When the general court established a special select standing council of magistrates for life with extraordinary powers the ministers gave it their approval.[33] The deputies, however, though they initially [redacted] in creating the council always suspected it, and its career proved short and ill-fated.[33a]

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[30] Winthrop Jl., I, 157.

[31] Proc. MHS, LVIII (1924-25), 456-7.

[32] Winthrop Jl., I, 363; II, 3, 41-3, 119.

Like the controversy over office for life, conflict over the "negative voice" began early. At the General Court of September 3, 1634, the magistrates by a peculiar construction of one clause in the charter claimed the right to veto all acts which did not receive the approval of a majority of magistrates. The deputies countered that an act needed only a majority of the whole court, deputies and magistrates together, in order to pass. Matters reached such an impasse the court had to adjourn temporarily. When it reconvened John Cotton preached a sermon in which he declared the magistracy by virtue of its authority, the ministry by virtue of its purity and the people by virtue of their liberty had each a negative voice. This "gave great satisfaction": the issue was put aside and then forgotten entirely in the furor over John Endicott's ripping the cross out of the King's ensign on the grounds that it was a popish emblem.[34]

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[33] At least that was the way Winthrop remembered it in 1642. He wrote then that the standing council had been established "upon the advice and solicitation of the elders, and after much deliberation from court to court." Winthrop Jl., II, 78.

[33a] *Cf*. Ellen Brennan, "The Massachusetts Council of the Magistrates," New England Quarterly, IV (1931), pp. 54-93.

The intensity of the controversies over the negative voice and the cross produced a desire on the part of both people and magistrates to draw closer to each other and stop their contention. Winthrop noted that at the General Court of May 6, 1635, "Divers Jealousies, that had been between the magistrates and deputies, were now clared, with full satisfaction to all parties."[35] That session and subsequent ones passed legislation designed to satisfy the magistrates' demand for the power appropriate to superiors and the people's insistence on the limitation necessary on all power. Magistrates and deputies both received a negative voice on all legislation and judicial acts, and the Court also set up the standing council of life magistrates. At the same time the process of curtailing the magistrates' discretionary judicial powers began with the appointment of committees to draw up a written code of fundamental law.[36] Winthrop did not like prescribed laws and he liked prescribed penalties even less,[37] but here he found himself at variance with both the ministers, who usually supported him, and even many of his fellow magistrates. In their attempts to bring magisterial power under control the freemen achieved their greatest success on the matter of a written code of fundamental law.

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[34] Winthrop Jl., I, 166-169.

[35] Ibid., I, 191.

This reconciliation put a temporary halt to the problem of defining the relationship between ruler and ruled, and then the Antinomian crisis of 1636-38 submerged the question entirely. Three magistrates who supported Anne

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[36] Mass. Rec., I, 167, 168, 174-5.

[37] Winthrop Jl, I, 388-89.

Hutchinson lost their offices in 1637, but it did not take any theoretical innovations to justify that. Heretical rulers deserved to lose their offices at the very least. Massachusetts had had enough controversy of any sort for a few years, and when Winthrop assumed the governorship again in 1637 he held it (except for two years) until 1644. Final settlement of the debate over the nature and extent of the good ruler's prerogatives came only at the conclusion of the prolonged constitutional crisis of 1642-5.

In those four years all the issues of the past twelve came to a head almost simultaneously. The "sows case," originating in 1642, renewed the struggle over the negative voice for another two years. At the same time Richard Saltonstall, one of only two magistrates who opposed the negative voice, decided the time opportune to attack the standing council too. The court had stripped the members of that institution of their authority as magistrates following a controversy in 1639,[38] and its powers remained emphemeral after that date, but aside from causing fresh argument Saltonstall's criticisms helped inspire the deputies from his home town of Salem to lead a head-on assault on all the magistrates' executive powers.

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[38] Ibid., I, 360-64. Mass. Rec., I, 264.

With their legislative and executive functions under fire, the magistrates' judicial powers could hardly escape. The freemen had gotten a written body of liberties and a statement of capital offenses, but they were still agitating for a codified fundamental law and fixed penalties for other crimes. Winthrop found it necessary to write a "Discourse on Arbitrary Government," a brief for leaving penalties at the discretion of the judges, and then to defend it against an outraged body of deputies. Assailed on all sides the magistrates acquitted themselves well and in the process firmly established their status and authority.

The sow's case came first chronologically. In June, 1642, Goody Sherman of Boston, unable to win a favorable judgment against Captain Robert Keayne in the lower courts for allegedly misappropriating her stray sow six years before, appealed the case to the General Court. A plurality of the deputies supported her, the majority of the magistrates Captain Keayne, and the case was deadlocked for two years.

Trifling the issue might be, but it set the deputies ~~to~~ reconsidering their concession of the negative voice in 1636.[39] Under Richard Saltonstall's leadership an aroused body of freemen and deputies once more demanded majority rule in the General Court, only to be overwhelmed by Winthrop assisted by some of the ministers.

In discussing the "sow business" and the dispute arising out of it Winthrop made some significant statements about the differing natures of the deputies and the magistrates. He noted in his journal that most of the deputies realized the triviality of the case and also that the evidence, such as it was, stood in favor of Captain Keayne. Still, they continued to press for further review, carried along "in this course as it were in captivity" because their constituents supported Goody Sherman so emphatically.

> the deputies stood only upon this, that their towns were not satisfied in the cause (which by the way shows plainly the democratical spirit which acts our deputies, etc.) . . .[40]

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39. Winthrop Jl., II, 86.

40. Ibid., II, 140-141.

That the people could force the "democratical" deputies to tie up the General Court for months at a time in taking repetitive testimony about the number of spots under a pig's ear epitomized for Winthrop the weakness of democracy.

The magistrates suffered from no such disability or at least ought not to. Winthrop registered genuine alarm when he heard rumors that the people had become so incensed over the negative voice they would purge the body of magistrates of its supporters and put in men more conformable to their own opinions. This Winthrop called not simply dangerous but "dishonourable," meaning it would violate the fifth commandment. Magistrates qualified for office by their ability, not by the way they had carried out the people's will in the past or their willingness to do it in the future.

> . . . because it is knowne that diverse of the magistrates are not like to consent to it [repeal of the negative voice], they must therefore be lefte oute . . . and others put in their places . . . dishonorable it would be, to take the power from those whom the countrye pickes out, as the most able for public service, and putt it into the hands of others, whom they passe by, as the more weake. [41]

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[41] Winthrop Papers, IV, 359-60.

Winthrop need not have worried. The magistrates of 1642 remained the magistrates of 1643, 1644 and 1645 despite popular discontent with their powers.[41a] The freemen simply

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[41a] The system of electing magistrates used in these and subsequent years has caused considerable confusion and led some historians to assert, incorrectly, that it insured the automatic re-election of the old magistrates or that it prevented new candidates from standing for office. Under an act of May, 1640, renewed with variations from time to time until 1649 the freemen in the fall of each year balloted for nominees for magistrates and sent the results into the General Court. The Court in turn selected the twenty individuals having the highest total vote and sent their names back to the freemen for acceptance or rejection at the time of the Court of elections in the spring. No new candidates could be proposed after the nominations in the fall. Mass. Rec., I, 293; II, 21, 37.

Although the laws did not explicitly state it, the evidence indicates that the old board was automatically renominated and that the Court simply submitted to the towns enough new names to make a total of twenty when combined with the old magistrates. In October, 1640, when the magistrates consisted of governor, deputy governor and eight assistants, the Court sent only ten additional nominees to the freemen, making the required total of twenty, and the freemen chose to re-elect only the incumbents and none of the new nominees. Mass. Rec., I, 308. In December, 1641, it sent only six new names to the freemen, and that time they selected two of them as well as re-electing all the old magistrates (except for one who had gone back to England). Mass. Rec., I, 345.

In June, 1641, the Court did propose a new system to do away with nominations by having every ten freemen elect one of their number "to bee sent to the Court, with the power to make election for all the rest. . . ." This was could not bring themselves to substitute a willingness to enact their demands for the traditional categories of wisdom and virtue. If they could have done it, they would never have needed to contest the negative voice. It

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a suggestion only, which the deputies carried to their constituents for approval or rejection. No record of the freemen's reaction has survived, but evidently it was negative for the Court employed the nomination system in December. *Mass. Rec.*, I, 332-3.

In 1649 the Court changed the system slightly, apparently discontinuing automatic renomination of incumbents. The freemen would nominate candidates by written ballot in November and the twenty with the highest totals would be submitted to them in May for acceptance or rejectimn as under the previous law. This new statute, however, had an important hooker: the order in which the names were submitted followed the number of votes cast for the candidates in November, *except that the incumbents, if among the top twenty, were always placed at the beginning of the list.* By consequence, to vote for a new man it would be necessary to reject an old one first. While it did not make change impossible, this new system obviously favored incumbents -- undoubtedly the reason the Court enacted it and the freemen did not object to the enactment, both groups working on the theory that a magistrate should not be removed without cause. No one seems to have objected to the system except some modern historians and Edward Randolph, and no law prevented the freemen from nominating William Hawthorne in November and voting for him in May while rejecting John Winthrop. The electoral law is in *Mass. Rec.*, II, 286-7.

appeared dangerous to them only because it put power into the hands of men whose use of power (providing it stayed within the limits of the decalogue) their ideology forbade them to question. They entered every political struggle under a handicap because they accepted implicitly the existence of a ruling class.

Consequently, Winthrop made his most convincing points in defense of the veto not in his interpretation of the charter -- that remained debatable at best -- but in explaining to the freemen that revocation of the negative voice would deprive the magistrates of the very status of ruler which the freemen had given them by election. Massachusetts had passed from a pure aristocracy into a mixed one in 1634 because in that year the people (in the form of their embodiment, the deputies) had gained the right to join their rulers, the magistrates, in the making of laws. Using a logic similar to that of the "short treatise," Winthrop argued that without the negative voice a deputy's vote would be equal to a magistrate's, and then the government would changed from mixed aristocracy to "meere [pure] Democratie." The magistrates (who were also freemen) would cease to be rulers and become exactly like all other freemen, casting their votes in General Court in the same manner as all other freemen did. Then the people would have had no rulers but themselves, and Massachusetts would indeed become a democracy. True, the magistrate's vote in effect would still be worth many times that of the ordinary freeman because a deputy's vote really contained the votes of all the freemen in his town combined into one, but "the matter lyes not in the number of people Assembled, but in their power." If the freemen desired it they could dispense with the deputies and come and give their votes in person as the magistrates did. For Winthrop the essence of mixed government consisted in the various parts, the rulers and the people, having an absolute check upon each other.[42]

Winthrop's reasoning may not appeal to the twentieth century but the seventeenth found it unanswerable. He observed in his journal that the freemen, carried away with the passion of the moment, had not really understood the issue until he explained it. After their tempers cooled and his arguments had had time to sink in they conceded the point.[43] On March 7, 1643/4 the general court voted that henceforth magistrates and deputies would sit as two separate houses, no act of either house having force unless approved by the other.[44]

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[42] "Defense of the Negative Voice," ibid., pp. 382-3.

Winthrop had hardly triumphed in his defense of the magistrates' rights in the general court when their authority outside the court (where they constituted the colony's executive body) received a sharp challenge. Under Speaker William Hawthorne's guidance the very first session of the deputies sitting as a separate house conceived of a scheme to deprive the magistrates of their power to administer the colony's affairs between meetings of the general court. In June, 1644, the deputies sent up a commission for the magistrates' approval giving the administrative power "out of court" to a committee consisting of seven magistrates, three deputies and the Rev. Nathaniel Ward of Ipswich.

The magistrates naturally rejected the commission as the deputies undoubtedly knew they would. That did not matter: simply in drawing up a commission the deputies were asserting that no one, not even the magistrates, had power to govern the country between general courts unless the court delegated such power to them. The two houses agreed to put the question off until the next meeting of the general court in August and in the meantime to consult the elders, but to the magistrates assertion that they would exercise their traditional powers in the interim Speaker Hawthorne replied bluntly, "You will not be obeyed."[45] The magistrates (Saltonstall and Richard Bellingham excepted) countered by issuing a declaratimn to the freemen announcing that "by the patent, and election of the people, they are sett aparte to be the councell of this common wealth to governe the people in the vacancy of the General Courte. . . ."[46]

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[43] Winthrop Jl., II, 142-44.

[44] Mass. Rec., II, 58-9.

If more freemen had followed Hawthorne Massachusetts would have had its Civil War. The issue proved so serious because magistrates and deputies appealed to two conflicting

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45. Winthrop Jl., II, 204-6. Winthrop thought the whole thing a plot by the Essex County deputies to draw off the government into their county.

46. Winthrop Papers, IV, 467.

concepts within a common ideology: the idea that the ruler's authority came from the people by virtue of the covenant between governor and governed, and the idea that the ruler's authority came from God, who ordained the office of governor and merely allowed the people to name the person to fill it. The deputies claimed no office of government existed unless the general court as the sovereign power of the state created it. The magistrates countered that while the court could regulate their office, it could not deprive them of it, nor of inherent powers it derived from the terms of the charter and from the nature of the divinely ordained calling of governor. As usual Winthrop stated the point most succinctly:

> to make a man governour over a people, gives him, by necessary consequence, power to govern that people, otherwise there were no power in any case where it might fall out, that there were no positive law declared in. 47

Fortunately, Hawthorne had gone too far for most freemen, who chose to obey the magistrates when they acted

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47. Winthrop Jl., II, 204-6.

as a council during the period between the May and August general courts. The report of the ministers delivered to the latter body and promptly adopted by it confirmed the magistrates in their claim that by virtue of the charter and their election they were "the standing council for the commonwealth in the vacancy of the general court" and therefore had the power "to act in all cases subject to government according to the said patent and the laws of this jurisdiction." By concentrating on the patent the report neatly side-stepped the question of whether the magistrates power originated in the people or God.

> the magistratical power is given to the governour, etc., by the patent. To the People is given by the same patent, to designate the persons to those places of government; and to the general court power is given to make laws, as the rules of their [the magistrates'] administration. 48

Winthrop had also made use of the summer of 1644 to say something about the judicial powers appropriate to rulers, another subject of prolonged controversy. The

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48. Ibid., II, 250-56. Mass. Rec., II, 91-6. Another act of the general court formally reconfirmed the magistrates' powers. Mass. Rec.,II, 125.

magistrates served as the chief officials of the inferior quarter courts in their respective counties and sitting in body as a court of appeals from these lower courts and also as the court of original jurisdiction for serious civil and criminal cases. Their decisions could be appealed to the general court, but even there the magistrates could confirm their decision by use of the negative voice. Under these circumstances the freemen wanted the magistrates' judicial decisions regulated as closely as possible by positive law.

In his "Discourse on Arbitrary Government" Winthrop advocated leaving the penalties for crimes up to the judges. Aside from claiming that the punishment ought to fit the criminal, he advanced his favorite argument that the powers of "judicature" were reserved exclusively to the calling of ruler. The people had the right in both old Israel and the new of appointing the best among the tribes to the office of judge, but they had no calling as subjects to exercise that office themselves. If the general court, which consisted of the people as well as their rulers, attached fixed penalties to its criminal statutes, then the people would have acted as judges and exceeded their calling. In effect, Winthrop claimed that unless rulers and ruled observed the limits of their respective callings there could be no superiority and so no government.[49]

When the ministers presented their report to the general court in August, 1644, the deputies questioned them about Winthrop's doctrine and they gave it a highly qualified endorsement. Penalties for certain specific crimes could be found in the word of God; the judge should use his discretion in punishing other crimes in order to take into account the varying circumstances of the offender, but positive law should fix the range of penalties from which he could choose.[50] Of all the issues involving the prerogatives of rulers, deputies and ministers came closest to agreement (and moved farthest from Winthrop) in their demand for limitation of government by a fixed body of codified statutes. Ultimately the deputies would win this point with the issuance in 1648 of *The Lawes and Liberties of Massachusetts,* which prescribed fixed penalties for many crimes.

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[49] *Winthrop Papers,* IV, 468-82.

[50] *Mass. Rec.,* II, 93-94.

In 1644, however, the freemen and deputies had no way of knowing this. Fourteen years of simultaneous application of the doctrines of relative duties and of social covenant to the Massachusetts political system had produced a class of elected rulers with extensive inherent legislative, executive and judicial powers subject to control only by the acts of a bicameral legislature in which they sat as the upper house. Attempting to curtail the powers of the rulers while admitting their non-accountability had failed, had, in fact, only confirmed them with those powers all the more thoroughly. Some of the deputies had finally become desperate enough to forget orthodox Puritan political theory temporarily in order to strike directly at the heart of the magistrates' position. They would make the magistrates responsible to the general court as a whole by using a device the English parliament had developed for similar purposes: impeachment.

Technically a judicial process, impeachment of the King's ministers when their policies proved sufficiently objectionable, provided an effective means of parliamentary control of government. First employed in 1376 against

Edward III's ministers and again in 1386 against Richard II's minister, the Duke of Suffolk, impeachment had passed out of use after 1450, only to be revived with new vigor in the parliament of 1621. At the very time the deputies decided to employ it in Massachusetts, the impeachment process had just produced its greatest prodigies in England by precipitating the fall of Strafford, Laud, Finch and the ship money judges.[51]

The occasion selected for the attempt arose out of an incident almost as trivial as Goody Sherman's suit for her sow. The people of Hingham had replaced an unpopular militia commander with one they found more agreeable and when the magistrates restored the first officer some of the militia refused to serve under him. The magistrates considered that contempt of authority. Winthrop (currently serving as deputy governor) and three other magistrates bound over four of the Hingham ringleaders for appearance at the next general court. Such disputes occurred often enough, but this time when the general court met on May 14, 1645, eighty-one inhabitants of Hingham presented a petition "wherein they complained of their liberties infringed."[52] The petition named Winthrop and Winthrop only, and the deputies insisted he stand trial before the general court. Winthrop himself and undoubtedly everyone else in Massachusetts appreciated the political nature of the trial: he did not stand charged with any specific criminal offense, and although three other magistrates had joined him in the disputed act only he, the chief upholder of magisterial powers, had come under indictment.[53] The prime movers of the business were attempting to establish a degree of responsible government in Massachusetts by borrowing the English technique of using a judicial process to try a magistrate for purely political offenses.

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[51] George Burton Adams, Constitutional History of England (2nd ed.; New York: 1962), pp. 207-10, 280-82, 310-12.

It ended in total disaster for the deputies. Impeachment of Winthrop obviously went too far for most of the freemen: the managers in the lower house had trouble carrying even a bare majority of the deputies themselves with them on most points. From the first they saw no chance of really punishing Winthrop: the deputies held out for a light censure on one minor point while the upper house insisted on full acquittal and heavy fines for the petitioners.[54] A deadlock resulted until the magistrates moved to call in the clergy as arbitrators. Knowing "that many of the elders [ministers] understood the cause, and were more careful to uphold the honor and power of the magistrates than themselves well liked of" and "finding themselves now at the wall" the deputies capitulated completely.[55] The court imposed heavy fines on the chief instigators of the Hingham petition, including the two deputies from the town, ordered the rest of the petitioners to pay £ 50 towards the court costs and declared Winthrop himself "legally acquited of those things that have beene complained of."[56]

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[52] Mass. Rec., II, 97.

[53] Winthrop himself held that the Hingham case climaxed the conflict between magistrates and deputies that had arisen in 1642. Winthrop Jl., II, 282-6.

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[54] The conflict is best traced in the deputies' records. Mass. Rec., III, 19-26.

[55] Winthrop Jl., II, 271-9.

[56] Mass. Rec., II, 114.

Then Winthrop gave his famous "little speech" on liberty to the assembled deputies and magistrates. For its eloquence and lucidity the speech deserves all the attention it has received, but it did not contain a single new idea. Even the definition of civil liberty as "a liberty to that only which is good, just and honest" had been seen before.[57] Winthrop simply reiterated the standard propositions of Puritan political theory, but the occasion of the speech carried them home to the deputies with tremendous force. In calling Winthrop to account for an action not clearly wicked the deputies had violated the law of God and they knew it. Winthrop shrewdly began by making this point perfectly clear.

> It is yourselves who have called us to this office, and being called by you, we have our authority from God, in way of an ordinance, such as hath the image of God eminently stamped upon it, the contempt and violation whereof hath been vindicated with examples of divine vengeance.

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[57] "I know it will be pretended that all manner of restraint is prejudicial to Liberty and I grant the name of Liberty is pretious soe it be Liberty to doe good but noe farther." John White to John Winthrop, 16 Nov. 1636, Winthrop Papers, III, 322.

Then he brought up the covenant theory:

> The covenant between you and us is the oath you have taken of us, which is to this purpose, that we shall govern you and judge your causes by the rules of God's laws and our own, according to our best skill.

But the magistrate as a fallible human being "doth not profess nor undertake to have sufficient skill for that office, nor can you furnish him with gifts, etc." Called to the office because he possessed wisdom superior to the people's, the people must not resist or remove him merely because he seemed to them to have done something unwise. Only if a magistrate committed an act with a clearly wicked intent could the people call him to account:

> But if he fail in faithfulness, which by his oath he is bound unto, that he must answer for. If it fall out that the case be clear to common apprehension, and the rule clear also, if he transgress here, the error is not in the skill, but in the evil of the will: it must be required of him. But if the case be doubtful, or the rule doubtful to men of such understanding and parts as your magistrates are, if your magistrates should err here, yourselves must bear it. [58]

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[58] Winthrop Jl., II, 279-82.

That finished the deputies. There would be controversies aplenty in the remaining years under the old charter, but none of them would involve the prerogatives of the ruling class. Winthrop reassumed the governorship the next year and held it until his death, the elders apparently assuming it no longer wise to "labour" for rotation in office. Though he died in 1649, for the rest of the century the office of magistrate would retain the powers and definition he had given it: a ruler elected by the people but deriving his authority from God. Thanks to Winthrop Massachusetts government was a mixed aristocracy, not a mixed or pure democracy. The bulk of political power, executive, legislative and judicial, resided in that branch of government not responsible to the people.

> It is so fixed in the Governor and assistants, as (how many soever shalbe joyned to them, as coadjutors or counsellars etc. yet) the maine strengthe of Authoritye (in pointe of dispensation) will rest in them, and can by no lawe be avoided. . . . 59

Of course, no power, theoretical or actual, required the magistrates to ignore the wishes of the people, who

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59. Winthrop Papers, IV, 359.

might (and often did) petition the general court to express their desires. But the petitions had to take the forms of requests or humble advices, not demands or flat statements of the popular will. As a peaceable and humble man the good ruler should willingly yield to the people's wishes on minor matters in order to maintain social unity; generally, the rulers were so willing, particularly with a moderate and conciliatory individual like Winthrop in the governorship.[60] No one, however, not even the people, believed that the magistrates had to follow the popular will on any matter, major or minor, or that their tenures of office depended on it.

By default the magistrates even triumphed on the delicate issue of office for life. The standing council had disappeared in the chaos of 1644, but they no longer needed it anyway. No law prescribed life tenure, but it came into use in actual practice. After Winthrop's death Endicott assumed the governorship and held it (with the exception of two years) until he himself died; the remaining three governors under the old charter also served for life as did the deputy governors unless they succeeded to the governorship. With only a few exceptions the assistants also held their posts until death, retirement or removal to England.

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[60] For example, the general court granted an allowance towards maintenance of fortifications on Castle Island on March 7, 1643, even though it thought they would be near useless because six of the towns were very excited about it and the court wishes "to keep loving correspondency among all the towns." Winthrop Jl., II, 188.

Though historians have often presented the decades after 1660 as a period of increasing tension within and without the body of freemen,[61] the composition of the magistrates did not reflect it; if anything, it was more stable than in the previous period. The freemen saw nothing incongruous in electing men of the most diverse opinions to serve together as magistrates solely on the basis of their ability and rank. Richard Bellingham, the arch-prosecutor of Quakers and other religious dissidents, and

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[61] Viola F. Barnes, The Dominion of New England (New Haven: 1923), pp. 8-10, 22-23. Bernard Bailyn, The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century (New York: 1964), pp. 121-126, 143-167.

Francis Willoughby, a strong advocate of toleration, served together as governor and deputy governor respectively for six years without anyone thinking it odd. When the government of Charles II attempted to bring Massachusetts into a more integral relationship with the rest of the British Empire, the freemen, whatever their own opinions, still elected the same men magistrates, whether they supported a strongly independent policy for the colony or advocated conciliating the King. Even Joseph Dudley, who actively intrigued against the charter, enjoyed the same right of continuous re-election to the office of assistant. In the climactic year of 1684 Increase Mather led a movement to purge the magistrates of men willing to submit to the royal demands for revocation of the charter, but only three men out of 20 lost their posts, and the chief of them, Dudley, regained his the next year.[62]

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[62] The other two were William Browne and Bartholomew Gedney. Of the four men for whose defeat Increase Mather allegedly called in 1684 (Simon Bradstreet, William Stoughton, Peter Bulkley and Joseph Dudley), only Dudley lost his post. J.W. Fortescue, ed., Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1681-1685 (London: 1898), p. 607.

For all Increase Mather's efforts the charter fell in 1686, and he was instrumental in getting Massachusetts a new one in 1692. But the political system set up under the new charter presented insidious challenges to the reigning theory of political authority, challenges that theory could not entirely meet. Under the new electoral law a broad property franchise replaced the old requirement of church membership, although almost all of the new freemen (like everyone else in Massachusetts) continued to adhere to the Congregational faith.[63] Although the eighteen assistants and the deputies of the old charter simply became the twenty-six councilors and the representatives of the new, the colony also received a royal governor, appointed by the crown, with power to veto acts of the colonial assembly. Instead of the freemen electing the new councilors that power now lay with the representatives and the outgoing council board voting jointly. As a group the representatives were probably more willing to sacrifice virtue to party considerations in their choice of councilors than the people at large would have been. Still, the ministers continued to say the same things to the representatives in their election sermons as they had to the freemen under the old charter, and for a long time the representatives (within limits) did as the ministers said.[64]

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[63] Years before in discussing the proper function of Massachusetts government John Cotton claimed he was talking only about a system in which most freemen were church members. ". . . if the major, or more considerable part among them, will be like Heathen men, without such church fellowship, as is according to Christ in all things, a Heathen man or meer civil worldly politician, will be good enough to be their Magistrate." A Discourse About Civil Government in a New Plantation whose Design is Religion, pp. 11-13.

Yet even among the ministry those doctrines had begun to lose some of their power. Increase Mather had described the royal governor in 1693 as he "whom God has made captain over his people in this Wilderness."[65] Fifteen years later, however, both Mathers, Increase and his son Cotton, had a political falling out with the incumbent governor, Joseph

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[64] The Councilors under the province charter are in Whitmore, *Massachusetts Civil List*, pp. 46-64.

[65] *The Great Blessing of Primitive Counsellours*, p. 19.

Dudley. Unfortunately, Dudley was a ruler, and rulers might be criticized only for wickedness, nor particular political decisions. The Mathers responded by ignoring the specific items at issue between themselves and Dudley, and denounced him roundly for an odd assortment of crimes, small and great: bribery, unrighteous dealing, scheming against the new charter, "much hypocrisy and falseness in the affair of the college," murder and keeping bad company on the Sabbath, all improved by appropriate scriptural citations. Cotton Mather even intimated that the Lord would find Dudley's sins exceedingly provoking.

> Your age and health, as well as other circumstances, greatly invite you, Sir, to entertain awful thoughts of this matter, and solicit the divine mercy through the only sacrifice.

Dudley for his part had listened to enough election sermons as an assistant under the old charter to know how to reply. He refused to answer any of the Mathers' accusations and told them curtly that the powers that be are ordained of God.

> I must think you have extremely forgot your own station, as well as my character; otherwise it had been impossible to have made such an open

> breach upon all the laws of decency, honour, justice and christianity, as you have done in treating me with an air of superiority and contempt, which would have been greatly culpable towards a christian of the lowest order, and is insufferably rude towards one whom divine Providence has honoured with the character of your governour.

He advised the Mathers to remember "the Apostles wholesome advice, 1 Thes.iv.11."[66]

The Mather-Dudley exchange pointed up the extent to which the orthodox concept of ruler was ceasing to be meaningful to Massachusetts political life. Both sides simply traded Biblical phrases without ever mentioning the real differences between them. Yet the very fact that they felt constrained to use traditional forms meant those forms still exerted a strong hold on the contemporary mentality.

For all that, much of the political theory the inhabitants of eighteenth century Massachusetts inherited from the seventeenth could not have seemed very relevant to the problems of frontier defense, paper currency or the conflicts between governor and assembly.[67] The ministers continued to preach that God's vicegerents on earth deserved adequate maintenance but could not show what that had to do with the Massachusetts royal governor's demands for a fixed salary and control of the colonial treasury. The eighth commandment still forbade a currency that changed in value, but the Massachusetts ministry failed to demonstrate how the decalogue would solve their colony's currency shortage more adequately than paper money. The social convenant could become the Lockean social compact, but what of the god-given authority of civil rulers?

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[66] The entire exchange is in Collections MHS, First Series, III, 126-137.

Under all those difficulties the old ideology held out for an amazingly long time. In the years 1719-1721 conflict between the house of representatives, the council and the royal governor over everything from Indian policy to the right of appointing public notaries reached such an intensity that Thomas Hutchinson thought "the contests and dissensions in the government rose to a greater height than they had done since the religious feuds in the years 1636 to 1637." Yet, for all the obvious temptations, the house of representatives refrained from making any major changes in the composition of the council despite frequent and prolonged disagreement between the two bodies.[67a] Seventy years after Winthrop's death social standing, with its implied attributes of talent and virtue, still stood as the major qualification for a seat on the council. Nevertheless, in the face of an ever increasing number of questions for which it had no answers there would ultimately have to come a time when the endlessly repeated doctrine of the election sermons became just a collection of words.

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[67] Perry Miller, The New England Mind From Colony to Province, pp. 367-84.

It came in the "land bank house" of 1741. The representatives that year and the men who elected them did not want councilors with wisdom or virtue or high social status; they wanted a land bank. The Rev. William Williams, who gave the election sermon, could think of nothing more meaningful or relevant to say to the assembled representatives than to list the standard catalogue of the attributes of a good ruler and repeat the old injunction to choose rulers for their ability, not their advocacy of a particular scheme.

[67a] Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts, II, 170-196, 200-205. In 1720 the representatives elected exactly the same board as in 1719, while in 1720 they purged only three men out of twenty-six (Nathaniel Payne, Lt. Governor William Dummer and Jonathan Belcher), all of whom later regained their seats. Whitmore, Massachusetts Civil List, pp. 51-52.

> . . . therefore you will not suffer any *particular Party-cause,* or private *Selfish Views,* to influence you, or a regard to Men as *Favourers of such or such a Scheme,* no, tho' your *Principals* may have chosen you very much, with such a Design . . . [do] not, for the sake of any worldly views, neglect to chuse the *best and ablest* Men.[68]

The representatives might have slept through the whole sermon for all the attention they paid to it. Having listened politely, they purged fourteen of the eighteen councilors allotted to the area forming the old colony of Massachusetts Bay because the fourteen opposed the land bank, and replaced them with men who advocated the bank so strongly Governor Jonathan Belcher had to veto thirteen of their choices. The next day the representatives had just time to give Williams the customary vote of thanks and order that the sermon they had totally ignored be printed when

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[68] *God the Strength of Rulers and People, and Making them to be so, to each other mutually* (Boston: 1741), p. 42.

Belcher dissolved the assembly as a hopeless case.[69]

Bankrupt the traditional theory of authority may have been by 1741, but not superseded. The land bankers had no positive ideology to defend their purge or counter Williams' assertion of traditional doctrines, and their gains proved ephemeral as a result.[70] Ten of the fourteen purged councilors regained their seats within a few years, while only two of the thirteen members Belcher had vetoed ever actually took seats at the council board at a later date.[70a] The land bankers had not replied to Williams, they had only ignored him. Nathaniel Appleton's argument in the election sermon the following year was just as orthodox as Williams' and probably had just as much effect.[71] Seventeen forty-one proved simply that the hold of traditional doctrine had weakened sufficiently to permit men to forget it and proceed in an ideological vacuum when the pressures of material desires became great enough. Massachusetts still had some calmer times left to it before 1765, and in calmer times political practice remained to an extent under the control of political theory. That political theory on the nature of the ruler remained in turn what it had been in the days of John Winthrop. It would take a revolution to change it.

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[69] Brown, Middle Class Democracy, pp. 53-4. Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts, II, 298-301.

[70] Even "Americanus," in a contemporary pamphlet radical enough to be rejected by all the printers in Boston, did not seem to know what to do about the councilors. He was perfectly clear about the representatives: "It is the Right and Duty of the Electors, to examine into the Conduct, and to know the opinions and Intentions of those, who offer themselves to their choice. And (if they have served before) the best way to form a Judgement of their present views and Designes, is to survey their past Behavior, when in Office. How can you be truly represented, when you know not the sentiments of those who represent you." Yet he had to go on and admit a mixed form of government superior to any pure one and all he could say about the council consisted of the advice to choose representatives zealous for the people's liberties: "such representatives will choose such Councillors, and then all will be well." A Letter to the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of the Massachusetts Bay, Relating to their approaching Election of Representatives (Newport: 1739), pp. 3, 6, 7.

[70a] The ten who regained their positions were William Dudley, John Osborne, Ebenezar Burrill, Benjamin Lynde, Jr., Daniel Russell, Ezekiel Lewis, William Browne, Thomas Burry, Nathaniel Hubbard and Samuel Welles. The only two land bankers to become councilors were James Minot and John Otis. Whitmore, Massachusetts Civil List, pp. 56-58, 65.

[71] The Great Blessing of Good Rulers, depends upon God's giving his Judgements & his Righteousness to them (Boston: 1742), pp. 45-48.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC (I): CALLING, CAPITALISM, COMMERCE AND THE PROBLEM OF WEALTH

Just as the doctrine of social covenant had unlooked-for consequences when applied to political theory, so the Puritan economic ethic contained within itself features subversive of the social order it was designed to support. The Protestant concept of calling and the older doctrine of the stewardship of wealth produced and even encouraged a form of economic mobility inconsistent with the ideal of an ordered social hierarchy, and the resulting tension affected every man who seriously attempted to live his economic life according to orthodox ethical precepts.

The very name of the basic category of Puritan economic and social organization indicates its religious significance: "calling." Men received a call from God, a divine command to live a certain kind of life. Most important was the general calling "whereby a man is called out of the world to bee a child of God," to be one of His elect and to behave in this life as befitted one whom He had predestined to salvation.[1] But there was also a particular calling, the specific occupation God designated for each individual as the way in which he should provide his own maintenance and serve the common good. A man could attempt to live in a particular calling without having a general one, without having received saving grace, but then his work, no matter how faithfully executed, amounted at best to "nothing else in God's sight, but a beautiful abomination."[2] And he not only had to have both callings but he had to exercise them together: as he practiced his particular calling as a lawyer or husbandmen he should simultaneously practice the duties of his general calling as a redeemed Christian. Should the two callings ever come in conflict, the particular had to give way to the general.[3]

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[1] William Perkins, *A Treatise of the Vocations or* Men in Works, I, 724.

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[2] Perkins, The Nature and Practice of Repentance, Wks., I, 456. "In the same field, at the same time, in the same busines, there is the worke of the oxe, and the worke of a man; now I demand which of these twaine is the better work? I know the answer will be the work of the man, but the truth is, unless he be renewed by the grace of God, his labour is worse than the labour of the beast: for the beast in his kind obeies God, so doth not the unrepentant sinner." Treatise of Callings, Works, I, 743.

[3] Ibid., Treatise of Callings, Wks., I, 733-4, 734-5.

Whether general or particular, a calling was, as Williams Perkins defined it, "a certain kind of life, ordained and imposed on man by God for the common good,"[4] and God understandably wanted it practiced exactly as He had ordained. Men could not choose any calling for themselves anymore than they could choose any man to be their rulers. In both cases they had to agree voluntarily to serve God on the terms He laid down. Since He had instituted callings so that each man might contribute in his own particular way to the common good, a man's calling, to be "lawful," had to add in some way to the public welfare. A Christian could become anything useful from a swineherd to a prince, but he could not become a mountebank, a fortune teller or a gambler. Living dishonestly in a lawful calling was just as bad, and living without any calling was worst of all. However wealthy and able to live without work men might be, God did not make them members of a commonwealth in order that they might receive its benefits without contributing by their labor to its welfare.[5] "If thou beest a man that lives without a calling, though thou has two thousands to spend, yet if thou hast no calling, tending to publique good, thou art an uncleane beast."[6]

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[4] Ibid., I, 727.

Again, men must try to see that they entered the calling that God had actually designated for them. Since He was efficient as well as omnipotent, the talents and inclinations He had given each individual indicated the calling He had chosen for them. Anyone who entered a calling not suited to his particular skills in effect defied the divine order.[7] "Every man," Thomas Dudley advised his nephew, "ought (as I take it) to serve God in such a way whereto he hath best fitted him by nature, education, or gifts or graces acquired."[8]

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[5] *Ibid.*, I, 732-3. *Cf*. William Ames: "It is the ordinance of God, that every one by helping others in some particular calling, should glorifie God. . . Every one hath received his talent, or some part of a talent from God to that end; which cannot be buried or hid without sinne." *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof* in *Works* (London: 1643), p. 248 (3rd pagination). *Cf*. John Cotton, *The Way of Life* (London: 1641), pp. 439-40, Cotton Mather, *The Christian at his Calling* (Boston: 1701), pp. 42-44, Samuel Willard, *A Compleat Body of Divinity*, pp. 691-92.

[6] Cotton, *The Way of Life,* p. 449. Cf. Perkins, *Treatise of Callings, Works,* I, 733; Richard Sibbes: "Men without callings are exceedingly vicious, as some gentlemen and beggars. In this I may rank them together. Those that have no callings, nor fit themselves for a calling, and that are out of a calling lawful." *Works* (Edinburgh: 1862), VI, 521.

Circumstances by the same logic served as further indications of God's will about the choice of a calling.[9] When Governor John Winthrop's son Samuel, sent by his father on a trip to London to seek his fortune, stopped off instead en route at Teneriffe and apprenticed himself to a local merchant, he defended his action on the grounds that

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[7] Perkins, Treatise of Callings, Works, I, 735-6. Cf. Cotton, The Way of Life, 439-40; Willard, Compleat Body of Divinity, p. 693.

[8] Thomas Dudley to John Woodbridge, 28 Nov. 1642, quoted in Winthrop Jl., II, 309n.-310n. Woodbridge took his uncle's advice and entered the ministry, for which Dudley thought him suited.

[9] "But because there is a singular Providence of God exercised in directing such matters; therefore every one is rightly said to be assigned to this or that kind of life, as it were by Gods reckning." Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, Works, p. 327 (paged separately). Ames admitted that the call to a profession through outward circumstances was not as explicit or clear as the call to salvation.

"I have no fixed calling, not knowing what profession I should embrace," and because "I seem perswaded in this my choice by providences of God concurring in this wise: as if God had purposely provided this position for me at a time when all his [the Teneriffe merchant's] clerks have left him, so that no one is left to attend his business."[10]

Samuel also pointed out with some enthusiasm that the position provided a ready opportunity to make a lot of money, but there he showed the exuberance of youth.[11] If his father, the governor, answered the letter he probably reminded his son that the primary end of a calling lay in serving God and fellow men, not in amassing wealth. At least Thomas Dudley took this firm line with his own nephew: "Above all commend the case in prayer to God, that you may look before you with a sincere eye, upon his service, not upon filthy lucre."[12] William Perkins had explained it all years before. "All societies of men are bodies, a family is a bodie, and so is every particular church a bodie, and the commonwealth also," within which the members had their assigned parts for the good of the whole. If a man would fulfill his function as a member of the commonwealth, if he would not abuse his calling then he had to exercise it for the common good, not his own personal advancement.[13]

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[10] Samuel Winthrop to John Winthrop, c. March, 1645/6, 2 Proc. MHS, VII, 14-15.

[11] "Concerning the outward man here is as great a likelyhood for the raising my outward estate as in any place, considering the troubles of this age, and that with a little stocke, which I trust god will provide for me by some meanes or other in his due tyme." Samuel Winthrop to John Winthrop, 15 April 1646, Winthrop Papers, V, 74.

Given this philosophy and the conception of each particular calling as imposed on man by God, it followed that whatever men did, they must do it within the limits of their calling (the subject not usurping the functions of the magistrate, nor the magistrate the functions of the minister) and that men might change their callings only for the weightiest reasons. If they would become more serviceable to the public by such a change, as when a private man received a call to the ministry or to public office, then they had God's warrant for it, but a change of calling simply to obtain greater wealth or status manifested a love for God's creatures that interfered with love for God himself. Those of "mene place and calling" would find their consolation not in resisting the divine will, but in considering "that in serving of men, by performance of poore and base duties they serve God: and therefore that their service is not base in his sight: and though their reward from men be little, yet the reward at Gods hand, shall not be wanting."[14]

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[12] Winthrop Jl., II, 309n.-310n.

[13] Perkins, Treatise of Callings, Works, I, 728.

Read this way the doctrine of calling provided one more justification for inequality among men, for social stability, and for social hierarchy. God might hold all callings equal in the light of eternity, but men were not obliged to during their brief journey through this life. No lawful calling should be despised, but those of liberal parts, those with education, wealth or social standing, should choose liberal and not servile callings.[15] And certainly if the public welfare lay behind the operation of all callings, then those that contributed most to it deserved more "honor" than those that contributed less. The husbandman did not deserve the same degree of deference, of wealth, of attire, of ornament, and even of food as the magistrate and he should not aspire to them.[16]

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[14] Ibid., I, 734.

In William Perkins' view the whole notion of calling rested on inequality: "Persons are distinguished by order, whereby God hath appointed, that in every society one person should be above or under another; not making all equall. . . .

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[15] "Gentlemen and those that have attained unto lands and riches" while they must work at a suitable calling, are not obliged "to perform servile workes, which were too much baseness, nor to overtoyle themselves in bodily labour, which were needlesse and unprofitable for the common wealth, by taking from the poore their worke, and with it their wages and meanes of maintenance." They should engage instead in military pursuits, the law, "Physice," Divinity, or public service. John Downame, A Guide to Godlynesse (London: 1622), pp. 258-9. Cf. Samuel Willard, Compleat Body of Divinity, p. 615.

[16] Perkins, Cases of Conscience, in Works, II, 134-6. A Commentarie upon the Eleventh Chapter to the Heberewes, Works, III, 41 (2nd pag.). Cf. Downame, The Christian Warfare (London: 1634), pp. 510-513.

And by reason of this distinction of men, partly in respect of gifts, partly in respect of order, come personal callings." God had given men different gifts and consequently different callings, their inability to function without each other making society both possible and necessary, and with it the existence of social hierarchy. Any attempt to leave that calling chosen for each man by God as the best means by which he could serve society, could not fail to disrupt society:

> Every man must judge that particular calling, in which God hath placed him, to be the best of all callings for him. . . The practice of this dutie is the stay & foundation of the good estate both of church & common wealth: for it maketh every man to keepe his own standing, & to imploy himselfe painfully within his calling. But when we begin to mislike the wise desposition of God, and to thinke other mens callings better for us then our own, then followes confusion and disorder in every societie.[17]

Every man content in his place, devoting himself diligently to the duties appropriate to it, and to it only, hardly a new or uniquely Puritan teaching. Yet the very same doctrine by encouraging and even demanding that every man unceasingly and systematically pursue his livelihood, virtually forced him to get out of his place, to strive to grow richer, and in time possibly to pursue profit for its own and not the Lord's sake.

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[17] Perkins, Treatise of Callings, Works, I, 731-3.

That such a change did take place, that continuous work for the glory of God ultimately became an irrational but "rationalized" pursuit of profit without limit, constitutes, of course, the basic contention of Max Weber's brilliant and much criticized _The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism._[18] Though the question of the real importance of Weber's _Geist der Capitalismus_ to modern capitalistic development lies beyond the scope of this discussion, much of what Weber theorized does help explain the development of the new society the Puritans attempted to construct in New England and the true nature of the peculiar tension that inhered in Puritan economic life.

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[18] All references to this work are to the Scribner's paperback edition, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: 1958). The literature dealing with the Weber thesis is very large indeed, and I will not attempt to summarize it here. There is a partial bibliography in R.H.Tawney, _Religion and the Rise of Capitalism_ (New York: 1953), p. 237. Reference is to the Mentor paperback edition.

In restricting themselves to demonstrating that the Puritans held an unremitting hostility to the "spirit of capitalism" Weber's critics have not come to grips with his argument.[19] Granted that Puritan writers had a name for the appetite that craved profit without end or final purpose, and it was covetousness; and a name for capitalist individualism, and it was pride; and a place for the covetous and the proud, and it was hell. For all that, Puritan doctrines could conceivably produce those tendencies anyway. Even if the Protestant ethic never did become the spirit of capitalism, proponents of that ethic may still have all unwillingly promoted a social mobility that played havoc with their ideal of social order.

Certainly John Cotton, no friend of pride, covetousness and ambition, would have seconded Weber's association of diligence in one's calling with a predestinarian theology.[20] Cotton answered the question "how shall I know that I have that life, in having of which, I may know I have Christ?" in part with the directive: "looke at thy worldly business, art though diligent in thy calling, it is well; and you say, cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently; and the work of his calling is, the worke of the Lord."[21]

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[19] Charles H. and Katherine George have provided the best recent attack on Weber of this sort, noteworthy for its lucidity and learning, in The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, 1570-1640 (Princeton: 1961), pp. 144-173.

Diligence in a calling not only gave proof of salvation, it was, as Cotton wrote, the work of the Lord: it glorified God, and that after all was the chief end of man. Protestantism had given an almost sacramental quality to the affairs of this world.[22] Men who performed them in the right spirit rendered as much service to God that way as when they knelt in prayer or took the sacrament. The Christian life, John Downame explained, involved more than the performance of certain especially holy things:

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[20] Weber, pp. 109-115. The Protestant Ethic.

[21] Christ the Fountaine of Life (London: 1651), p. 126.

[22] As the Georges point out, English Protestants laid so much stress on the particular calling it came "very close to becoming the spiritual, salvation-working calling as well as the moral, socially utilitarian vocation." The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation, p. 169. Cf., Weber, The Protestant Ethic, pp. 108-109.

> . . . if we thus performe the duties of our calling, in love towards God, and in obediaence to his commandement, and desire by prayer his blessing upon our labours, and yield him praise when he hath vouchsafed to give it, then shall we therein doe service unto God, though our condition and the workes of our vocation be never so meane and base, as well as in hearing the word, or receiving the sacrament, or in preforming the most excellent duty which he hath commanded, seeing though they differ in the matter, yet not in respecte of our minde, and the manner of doing them.[23]

The Protestant did not buy his way into heaven by accumulating a sufficient number of individual holy works; he glorified God, showed his gratitude to Him, and gave evidence of his salvation by the total pattern of his behavior over a whole lifetime. Downame made it perfectly plain that "We are called to be Gods labourers; and therefore we must intend our business, that it may prosper in

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23. A Guide to Godlynesse, p. 248. Cf. Richard Mather, A Farewell Exhortation (Cambridge, Mass.: 1657), pp. 16-18. Thomas Shepard even wrote that devout thoughts and the desire to pray which came so frequently as to disrupt work at a calling had been sent by the Devil. God was more honored by the "mean and base outside of civil affairs" if that was what He had called the believer to, than by noble thoughts and prayers if He had not given him a call to that. Certain Select Cases Resolved (London: 1648), pp. 34-5.

our hand, and not undoe in one day, that which we have done in another. . . . But we must in the whole & daily course of our lives, give *all diligence to make our calling and election sure,* by holding a constant and continual course, in the christian exercises of a godly life."[24]

Precisely *because* men laboured for God and *not* for gold (or status or honor), they had to continue working in their callings constantly: material needs or even the desire for riches might be satisfied at some finite point, but God never. Downame understood that just as well as Weber. He had no use for "the common practice of world" that "many may live without any calling at all, or having one, may onely labour so much as they neede or will stand with their credit and place. As though there were no other bonds to tye them unto any paines, but necessity among the poorer sort, increase of riches among those who desire to increase their wealth to an higher pitch, and honour and authority among those who are in a place of government." This he answered with the assertion that the divine injunctions to work at a calling "concerne all men of all estates and conditions, rich and poore, noble and base, so long as they are able to take paines, and are not made unfit by age and impotency, sicknesse and such other infirmities."[25]

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[24] *Guide to Godlynesse,* pp. 168-9. ". . . Wee must constantly and continually, in every thing, and at every time, performe service unto God in all our actions and throughout our whole course and conversation. . . . Neither is God alone served, when we performe some religious act, as praying, hearing the Word, singing Psalmes, or some eminent workes of charity and sobriety, but also in the meanest duties of the basest calling, yea even in our eating and drinking, lawfull sports and recreations, when as wee doe them in faith. . . ." *Ibid*., p. 164. *Cf*. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, pp. 115-121.

It is true that like most Puritans Downame allowed men "due" recreation. They must work at their callings most of the time, but not all-that would breed melancholy and weariness, as much "the mother and nurse of waywardness and impatiency" as idleness. Men should take moderate indulgence in "walking in pleasant places, conferences which are delightfull without offence, Poetry, Musique, Shooting, and such other allowable Sports as best fit with mens severall dispositions for their comfort and refreshing." But this in turn should serve only as refreshment to make men once more fit for their callings and more efficient in them than if they had taken no rest at all. Another prominent English Puritan, Richard Sibbes, wrote that the godly should use their recreations "as whettings to be fitter for our callings, and enjoy them as liberties, with thankfullness to God, that allows us these liberties to refresh ourselves."[26]

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[25] Guide to Godlynesse, p. 257. By the same logic that required the rich to keep at work in their callings though they had enough to live on, the poor also must do so even if their callings did not bring in enough to support them (if they could not find new callings) or involved drudgery, discouragement and little reward. Ibid., pp. 259-261.

New England Puritans tended to be even less indulgent towards activity outside a calling than their English predecessors and contemporaries. The Massachusetts General Court early passed and enforced laws against idleness and required parents to bring their children up in a warrantable calling,[27] while the ministers labored so strenuously to promote diligence and industry, they sometimes seemed to lose contact with reality. As early as 1636, when everyone in Massachusetts undoubtedly had quite enough to do just trying to stay alive, the Rev. Hugh Peter was already lamenting that idleness would be the ruin of the commonwealth.[28] But even Peter seemed like a proponent of organized sloth compared to the leading light of the third generation in New England, Cotton Mather, who urged constant and diligent work as a remedy for everything from economic depression to masturbation.[29] Mather also had nothing against appealing to his readers' self-interest as a spur to industry:

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[26] Downame, The Christian Warfare, pp. 989-90. Sibbes, Works, VI, 507.

[27] Mass. Rec. I, 109, 198, 203; II, 126, 180; V, 373. Instances of enforcement of the laws against

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idleness are very numerous in both Essex and Suffolk Counties. G.F. Dow ed., Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County Massachusetts (Salem: 1911-1921), passim. Zachariah Chafee ed., Records of the Suffolk County Court, 1671-1680, Publ. CSM (Boston: 1933), vols. 29, 30, passim. See the respective indexes under "Crimes, Idleness" and "Idle Persons." Cf. infra Chapter V, pp. 264-267.

[28] Peter announced in a sermon on May 15, 1636, that "he feared idleness would be the ruin of both church and commonwealth" and later listed it as of the three principal causes of the Antinomian crisis. Winthrop Jl., I, 222, 249.

[29] Cotton Mather, Concio ad Populum (Boston: 1719), pp. 15-17; A Flying Roll for the House of the Thief (Boston: 1713), p. 33; The Pure Nazarite (Boston: 1723), p. 16.

> I tell you with Diligence a man may do marvellous things. Young man, Work hard while you are Young: You'll Reap the Effects of it, when you are Old. Yea, How can you ordinarily Enjoy any Rest at Night, if you have not been well at Work, in the Day? Let your Business Engross the most of your Time. Tis not now and then an Hour at your Business that will do (.) Be stirring about your Business as Early as tis Convenient. Keep close to your Business, until it be convenient you should leave it off.

As for the negligent, "I will say as the Apostle, They are dead while They live. And I will add, probably they have not long to Live; and They will Dy not having where with [all] to Live."[30]

Mather also had some strong opinions on efficiency. If men might not do the Lord's work lazily, neither could they do it carelessly. The Christian must not only attend his calling constantly, he must manage it with prudence or he failed the trust the Lord had given him. Mather's Christian At His Calling also exhorted to double-entry bookkeeping and frequent inventories, all in the name of religion:

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[30] A Christian at his Calling, pp. 48-9.

> Take this Advice, O Christian; 'Tis a *Sin*, I say, 'Tis ordinarily a *Sin*, and it will at Length be a shame, for a man to *Spend* more than he Gets, [illegible] his *Layings out* more than his *Comings in*. A frequent Inspection into the *State of your Business*, is therefore not among the least *Rules* of *Discretion*. It was among the Maxims of Wisdom given of Old, *Be Thou Dilligent for to Know the State of thy Flocks*; That is to say, often Examine the condition of thy *Business*, to see whether thou go forward or backward, and Learn how to Order thy Concerns accordingly. [31]

To be sure, the status of Prudence as a virtue went back at least as far as Aristotle, and a Catholic monk invented double-entry bookkeeping. But only Puritanism, or at least Protestantism, made the management of personal and business finances important works of religion and evidences of sanctification (and therefore of salvation); a well-kept ledger really could be as significant a monument to God as a stained glass window. When the grasping but strongly Puritan Boston merchant Robert Keayne came to write his lengthy combination will and apologia in 1653, he devoted nine full pages to his bookkeeping. Though a wealthy and respectable member of the community, Keayne had had a mixed career in Boston, being charged with covetousness in 1639 and 1642 and with drunkenness later in his life. Now, for his defence he pointed to his account books. There, he wrote, lay the record of his virtue, there lay the proof that he had "redeemed his time" and lived his life by the Lord's precepts:

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[31] *Ibid*., pp. 53-54. *Cf*. Richard Steele, *The Trades-Man's Calling* (London: 1684), pp. 62-3.

> if all these [account books] should be of no other use, yet they will testify to the world on my behalf that I have not lived an idle, lazy, or dronish life, nor spent my time wantonly, fruitelessly or in company-keeping as some have been too ready to asperse me, or that I have had my whole time either in Old England or New many spare hours to spend unprofitably away or to refresh myself with recreation. . . . Rather I have studied and endeavored to redeem my time as a thing most dear and precious to me and have often denied myself in such refreshings that otherwise I might lawfully have made use of.

Unknowingly parodying Cardinal Woolsey, Keayne concluded his apologia with the plaintive lament that had he kept the books "of that spiritual estate between God and my own soul" as carefully as those of his material estate, he would not now be naked to the aspersions of his enemies.[32]

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[32] Bernard Bailyn ed., The Apologia of Robert Keayne, Publ. CSM (Boston: 1964), XLIII, 316-322.

Personal expenses demanded the same careful attention if man would obey the Lord. He sent men their wealth as well as their callings, and they were to use both for the same purpose, to glorify Him and to serve society. No man really owned his estate; he just received it in trust from God and administered it as a faithful steward would, for his master's appointed ends.[33] Writing on the eighth commandment, William Ames, the foremost Puritan casuist and systematic theologian of the first half of the seventeenth century, required of his readers a Christian "frugality" and "parsimony." Luxury and wastefulness, he pointed out, were not the ways of a godly man. No one had ever maintained that they were, of course, but then no one had ever brought household and business economy directly under the eye of an omnipotent and somewhat vengeful God before either. As God's steward we must "beware wee doe not idly lavish those things, which can bee employed either in profitable or honest causes" and that "wee looke, that no considerable thing of those, which may bee usefull bee lost." This Ames defined as "honest parsimony." "Honest frugality" required "That wee doe not lay out our money upon vaine, and unprofitable things" or excessive pleasures, but rather "That wee imploy our money in those things, which have a real use."[34]

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[33] ". . . noe man is made more honourable than another or more wealthy etc. out of any perticuler and singuler respect to himselfe but for the glory of his creator and the common good of the Creature, Man, Therefore God still reserves the propperty of the guifts to himselfe. . . ." John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity," Winthrop Papers, II, 283.

Ames was not trying to idealize the tight-fisted bourgeois shopkeeper--he required an honest liberality too. Resources were to be carefully husbanded in order that they might be spent on "real uses," an appropriate maintenance for one's self and family and the support of the poor, the church and the commonwealth. Nevertheless, his instructions properly followed by those anxious to obey the Lord's will could hardly fail to increase the estate of at least some of them, a development he did not object to so long as it did "not proceed from the love of riches; but out of conscience towards God, whose benefits wee ought not to abuse." He carefully noted that "Not every desire of riches is covetousnesse, but onely the inordinate love of them; and that love is inordinate which is repugnant to the love, which wee owe to God, or ouer Neighbour."[35]

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[34] Cases of Conscience, Works, pp. 254-255 (third pagination).

Since wealthy pious men would prove more serviceable to their neighbors and the commonwealth than would poor ones, most Puritan writers not only permitted but commanded men to increase their estate by virtue of their stewardship and the "positive" duties of the eighth commandment. The ruthlessly consistent Perkins did not think even a desire to help the poor legitimated the search for wealth,[36] but as early as 1616 John Downame was cheerfully announcing that "because the Scriptures require, that we should be bountifull and plentiful in good works, this should increase our care and diligence in preserving and increasing of our estates, by all lawful meanes, in acquisition and getting by our honest and painefull labours in our callings, and by our frugall husbanding and thriftie spending of our goods, that so having greater plentie we may be the richer in good workes." Anyone who could not give to charity because he had failed to attempt to increase his estate stood condemned for sloth, negligence, wasteful[illegible]s and ill husbandry.[37]

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[35] Ibid., pp. 255, 260-61 (third pagination).

[36] Perkins, Cases of Conscience, Works, II, 126. Not to be confused with Ames' work of a similar title.

Downame's contemporaries and successors reiterated the same doctrine throughout the seventeenth century.[38] A hundred years after the *Plea for the Poore* Samuel Willard's

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[37] *The Plea of the Poore*. *Or a Treatise of Benificence and Almes-Deeds* (London: 1616), p. 23. In a later work Downame cautioned against seeking any "abundance" (anything above the amount necessary to maintain a man in the particular station God had set him in), even if it was only to aid the poor. However lawful the intent, human corruption would turn it into unlawful channels. *The Christian Warfare*, pp. 448-51. This simply indicates the characteristic Puritan ambiguity on the subject of wealth. See *infra*, pp. 234-246.

[38] "Nay Religion bindeth a man to be a good husband, to seeke to preserve and increase also that estate that God hath given him. The eighth commandment, that bindeth a man not to impaire, but to increase, so far as in him lyeth the good estate of his neighbour, bindeth him much more to have a care of his own estate. It is not lawful for a man to be carelesse of his estate, no not upon pretense of charity or mercifulnesse to the poor. . . . The goods that any man hath are not his owne, but they are Gods gifts . . . and he is but the steward of them, and shall be called to account how he hath used them. . . . And therefore to cast any of them away, even the least bit of bread (oh that our gamesters and drunkards, and Prodigals could beleeve this) is a sin against God." Arthur Hildersham, *CVII Lectures Upon the Fourth of John* (2nd ed., rev.; London: 1632), pp. 238-39. *Cf*. Richard Baxter's much quoted Dictum 9, *A Christian Directory* (London: 1673), p. 450.

Compleat Body of Divinity made the identical point:

> It is not sufficient to take heed that nothing be wasted, but we must husband our Estates to Advantage: It is not enough to get an Estate, but there is a Duty to endeavour that it may prosper by good Husbandry of it, in the best way. Prosperity is a Blessing to be desired, (tho' not insatiably to be grasped after, which is a Temptation to Sin;) . . . Riches are consistent with Godliness; and the more a Man hath the more Advantage he hath to do Good with it, if God give him an Heart to it. [39]

Riches were not evil, nor was an advance in social status, but only covetousness and ambition, the desire for these things for their own sake rather than the glory of God. If a man did not seek riches as the end of his calling according to John Preston, the famous master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he would most likely find them -- as God's reward for diligent service: "God calls not a man to trust in himselfe to make riches his ayme and end, to seeke excess, superfluity and aboundance . . . our ayme must bee GODS glory and the publique good, and then GOD will cast riches upon us as our wages." [40]

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[39] P. 709.

[40] John Preston, A Remedy against Covetousnesse in Four Godly and Learned Treatises (London: 1633), pp. 43-45 (1st pag.).

It all came down to a matter of motives and attitudes. Preston understood the difference between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of Capitalism with a subtlety and exactness that would have delighted Max Weber: "God makes us rich, by being dilligent in our callings; using it to his glory and more good, he doth cast Riches on us. Man makes himselfe rich, when as he makes riches the end of his calling, and doth not expect them as a reward that comes from God."[41]

Since Preston died in 1628 his thought could hardly be labelled the product of a Puritanism gone soft and forced to compromise with the material interests of its most important backers. Some change naturally occurred in Puritan social thought in the course of the seventeenth century, some of it significant, but the basic elements of the Protestant ethic remained surprisingly unchanged.[42]

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41. Ibid., p. 42.

42. This interpretation obviously stands opposed to several others. R.H. Tawney criticized Weber for over-simplifying Calvinism and laid considerable stress on changes within the English Calvinist ethic during the

Certainly, Cotton Mather saw the world differently from William Perkins, but a whole century of intellectual upheaval lay between them. Perkins died while Queen Elizabeth

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seventeenth century, pointing out that economic change produced religious alterations as well as the reverse. Following Tawney, Robert S. Michaelsen attempted to show that Richard Baxter, Weber's chief source for the Protestant Ethic, represented a Puritanism "gone to seed" and lacking the rigor and emotional drive of earlier Puritan thought. Winthrop Hudson used a similar argument to attack both Weber and Tawney by maintaining that the complex of attitudes they considered the Protestant ethic did not become predominant in English Puritan thought until the end of the seventeenth century when "Puritanism had ceased to be Puritanism" and that it represented "an infiltration of a spirit which the convinced Puritan did not hesitate to label pagan and anti-Christian." Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism,* pp. 8-9, 262-63; Michaelsen, "Changes in the Puritan Concept of Calling or Vocation," *New England Quarterly,* XXVI (1953), 315-336; Hudson, "Puritanism and the Spirit of Capitalism," *Church History,* XVIII (1949), 3-17. Granted Weber may have oversimplified Calvinism (not a difficult thing to do) and that tremendous intellectual change took place in the seventeenth century, the complex of ideas Weber labeled the Protestant ethic existed in Puritan thought from the start and changed relatively little during the course of a century and a trans-Atlantic migration, particularly in comparison to other aspects of Puritan thought. I have attempted to indicate my reasons for thinking this throughout the paper and particularly in the section following.

still reigned; Mather came to his maturity after God had said let Newton be, and there was not only light but a new concept of order in his world. God in the whirlwind gave way in a large measure to God in the machine,[43] and Mather inclined to be less normative and more descriptive than most Puritans in much of his writing. Instead of exhorting men to work in their calling so as to further the public good, he tended to assume anyone who did work in a lawful manner automatically did further it. Even in his very definition of calling, God's instrumentality seemed more remote than in Perkins, and he placed a new emphasis on equity and utility:

> every Christian hath also a Personal Calling; or, a certain Particular Employment, by which his Usefulness in his Neighbourhood, is distinguished. God hath made man a Sociable Creature. We expect Benefits from Humane

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[43] "It is now plain from the most evident Principles, that the Great GOD not only has the Springs of this immense Machine, and all the several Parts of it, in his own Hand, and is the first Mover; but that without His continual Influence the whole Movement would soon fall to pieces." Mather added, true to a part of his heritage, "Yet besides this, He has reserved to Himself the power of dispensing with these Laws, whenever He pleases." The Christian Philosopher (London: 1721), p. 88.

> *Society.* It is but equal, that *Humane Society* should Receive Benefits from *Us*. We are Beneficial to *Humane* Society by the Works of that Special **Occupation**, in which we are to be employ'd, according to the order of God.[44]

The same difference in attitudes appeared in Mather's discussion of personal expenses. Perkins sent the perplexed believer to some hypothetical wise men, who would objectively determine his social status and tell him how much of his income he should spend to maintain himself in the station to which God had appointed him and how much was "superfluity," out of which he should give to "pious uses."[45] Cotton Mather would have sent the same believer to an account book with the injunction not to spend more than he earned; as for charity he advised giving a minimum of ten percent of income, more when possible.[46]

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[44] *A Christian at his Calling*, p. 37. Double underlining indicates Gothic bold-face type.

[45] *Cases of Conscience, Works*, II, 125. *Cf*. Downame, *The Christian Warfare*, pp. 448-51.

[46] On income and expenses see *supra* p.   *Cf*. Samuel Moodey, *The Debtors Monitor* (Boston: 1715), pp. 17-18. On charity see Cotton Mather, *Bonifacius* (Boston: 1710), p. 140. Richard Baxter and Thomas Gouge seem to have accomplished the change from superfluity to a minimum of ten percent of income in the 1670's. *Cf*. *The Christian Directory*, pp. 192-99 (2nd pagination).

Mather's passion for utility led him to make some strange statements, as when he advised Protestant propagandists to use the "Argument Ab utili" to persuade "the *European* Powers to shake off the Chains of Popery" -- "One showes, That the Abolishing of Popery in England, is worth at least Eight Millions of Pounds yearly to the Nation."[47] Still, in a mechanically efficient universe the categories of "utility" and "good" probably would coincide. Mather may have come fairly close to Benjamin Franklin and even Adam Smith on some points, but he stayed well within the Protestant tradition most of the time. Perkin's scholastic categories of "necessity" and "superfluity" went back to the schoolmen;[48] there was nothing particularly Puritan or even Protestant about them, and if Mather exchanged them for a simple accounting system he did not thereby introduce anything new into the traditional concept of calling, however hysterically he may have stated some of its features.[49]

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[47] *Bonifacius*, p. 180.

[48] Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 38.

[49] Long before Mather, William Ames had broken with his teacher William Perkins on the subject of social mobility

Long before Mather, even in its earliest and most rigorous form, the Puritan doctrine of calling not only enjoined a properly motivated individual to increase his estate, but gave him specific instructions on how to do it. The same ethic that assigned callings according to some objectively determined social order made the calling an instrument for the continuous disruption of that order.[50]

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and tacitly legitimated it. Perkins had implied (though he never actually stated) that all superfluity should be given away and he read 1 Corinthians 7: 20, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called," to mean just that. Ames refused to give a specific answer to the question "How much must be bestowed in almes," contenting himself with "much more on pious uses" than on pleasures. And though he kept the distinctions of necessity and superfluity, concepts which varied with a man's social standing, he never read 1 Cor. 7: 20 to mean that standing could not be changed: ". . . neither doth he [St. Paul] there command that every one abide in that state in which he was called: for he permits a servant to aspire to freedome, verse 21. But teacheth that here is no difference of a free man and a servant in respect of Christ and Christian [general] calling, Verse 22." Ames, The Marrow of Sacred Divinity in Works, p. 328, Cases of Conscience in Works, pp. 255-8 (third pag.).

[50] Samuel Willard, for example, enjoined men to increase their estates, held it a necessary part of the lawful conduct of a calling to take advantage of all opportunities and required men to maintain a "Port in Dite, Apparel and Entertainment" appropriate to their incomes, not some hypothetical social standard. At the same time (although he never used the concepts of necessity and

The Puritans never did find an answer to this problem. Their descendants would solve it (after the dissipation of much of the sense of human inability and divine omnipotence that lay at the root of Puritanism) only by doing away with the notion of order altogether and by converting the Protestant ethic into a straight-forward idealization of frugality and industry for their own sakes.

Given these ambiguities and the peculiar economic needs of New England, the Puritan society established in the New World had no quarrel with that group within itself which showed the greatest propensity for mobility: the merchants. Somehow individuals who amassed large fortunes came off

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abundance), he constantly associated calling with fixed social position, defining an "outward calling" as "some honest Employment, wherein persons do occupy themselves for the convenient support of the Affairs of this Life, in the Post that God's Providence sets them in." He also advised parents to choose a calling for their children "which may best suit their Genius and the Post they bear among men" and even held that "there are services which in themselves are lawful, but are also in esteem forbid, and not agreeable to some, who are of a more ingenious Education; and yet necessity requires them to be done; but are fitter for such as are of a more servile condition." Compleat Body of Divinity, pp. 709-11, 694-95, 691, 602, 615.

better in New England's eyes than those who grubbed together some petty sum. Neither John Winthrop nor New Englanders in general had much use for the laborer who accumulated £ 25 by taking extortionate wages and then returned to England "with his prey," presumably in search of dissipation and a higher social station. Jehovah being just, the laborer lost all his money in the mother country and had to return to Massachusetts and his former humble calling, much to Winthrop's satisfaction.[51] The death of a John Hull in 1683 was another matter entirely, a cause to consider *The High Esteen which God hath of the Death of his Saints.* Though he had risen from modest beginnings to become one of Boston's leading merchants and a magistrate, Hull had used his money soberly and remembered that God and not his own ability determined his commercial fortunes. He built himself a mansion house, as befitted his new rank, but he also gave liberally of his acquired wealth for the support of the poor and the commonwealth. It redounded only

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51. *Winthrop Jl.*, II, 119.

to his credit in the orthodox view that "Providence had given him a prosperous and Flourishing Portion of the Worlds Goods" because he knew what to do with it.[52]

New England could simply not afford the traditional medieval suspicion of commerce as unproductive or as more exposed to avarice than occupations like farming, which had less to do with money.[52a] No one in Massachusetts would have condemned trade on the grounds it did not produce anything -- the whole of the colony's economic life too obviously depended on trans-Atlantic commerce. John Oxenbridge, though he warned that magistracy was not a "merchandizing business," still held in his election sermon of 1671 that a good magistrate would encourage the development of staple commodities "which may command supplies from abroad."[53]

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[52] Samuel Willard, The High Esteem Which God Hath of the Death of His Saints (Boston: 1683), pp. 16-17.

[52a] For the medieval attitude on trade and commerce see Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, pp. 36-39; George O'Brien, An Essay on Mediaeval Economic Teaching (London: 1920), pp. 136-154.

[53] New Englands Freemen Warned and Warmed (Cambridge, Mass.: 1673), p. 41.

Governor William Bradford of New Plymouth did remark sourly in his history "Put not your trust in Princes (much less in merchants),"[54] but Plymouth was a poor farming community dependent on grasping and dishonest English merchants who took the settlers for all they were worth and more. Massachusetts Bay's mercantile community by contrast was home grown and fully integrated into Puritan society -- and it could claim a major part in bringing prosperity to the Bay Colony.

Yet no society has ever totally escaped some degree of friction among its constituent parts, and occasionally merchants like members of other groups came into conflict with the community as a whole. During the first decade of settlement the economic life of the colony was particularly tenuous, particularly dependent even for necessities on imports from England, and the colonists resented the sizeable profits some men made out of this trade. In 1639 the General Court singled out the Boston merchant Robert

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54. History of Plymouth Plantation (Boston: 1912), I, 258.

Keayne[55] for punishment as an example to the rest of the merchant community and fined him £ 200 for taking fifty to one hundred percent profit on his transactions.[56] Keayne also had to appear before the Boston Church, of which he was a member, to answer charges of covetousness. When he defended himself by saying he had mistakenly thought "that if a man lost in one commodity, he might help himself in the price of another" and that "if, through want of skill or other occasion, the commodity cost him more than the price of the market in England, he might sell it for more than the price of the market in New England," John Cotton read him the doctrine of just price in a form that would easily have satisfied St. Thomas Aquinas:

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[55] Bernard Bailyn has handled the Keayne incident in detail in "The *Apologia* of Robert Keayne, " *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., VII (1950), 568-587 and in his introduction to Keayne's will, *Publ.* CSM, XLII, 243-248. The discussion above should indicate that I dissent from Bailyn's interpretation. I would not deny that the Puritan economic ethic put Keayne and the merchants in a difficult dilemma, but I would assert that this was not the result of any "medieval business ethics," but of an ambivalent attitude towards the world in general, and that the same dilemma applied to all men whatever their profession.

[56] Keayne "was charged with many particulars; in some, for taking above six-pence in the shilling profit; in some above eight pence; and in some small things, above two for one." *Mass. Rec.*, I, 281; *Winthrop Jl.*, I, 377-80.

> A man may not sell above the current price, i.e., such a price as is _usual in the time and place, and as another (who knows the worth of the commodity) would give for it,_ if he had occasion to use it, as this is called current money, which every man will take, etc.[57]

Keayne "did with tears, acknowledge and bewail his covetous and corrupt heart" and the church let him off with an admonition, while the General Court remitted the larger part of his fine.[58] It would be easy to develop from this case an irrepressible conflict between the "medieval" oligarchy of magistrates and ministers, prizing piety, stability and order, and a "modern" class of merchant capitalists, who valued mobility and material acquisitions.[59]

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[57] _Winthrop Jl.,_ I, 380-82. _Cf._ William Perkins, _A Golden Chaine, Works,_ I, 65-66; William Ames, _Cases of Conscience_, _Works,_ 236-39 (3rd pag.).

[58] _Winthrop Jl.,_ I, 380; Richard D. Pierce ed., _The Records of the First Church of Boston, Publ._ CSM (Boston: 1961), XXXIX, 25, 29.

[59] Bernard Bailyn does present just such a picture in his _The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century_ (New York: 1964). He argues that "conflict between men

It would, in fact, be much too easy.

John Cotton's version of the just price did not entail any use of the price system to enforce some sort of pre-existing social hierarchy, and aside from the atypical speculations of the fifteenth century schoolman Henry of Langenstein, it does not seem that the just price ever did involve that concept.[60] Cotton's just price amounted to

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who had risen through the struggles of city life and the leaders of the Puritan commonwealth was implicit from the start" (p. 140), and that though the faith of the first generation held the clash in check, the struggle of Puritan magistrate and minister against modern merchant became blatant after 1660: "the business community represented the spirit of a new age. Its guiding principles were not social stability, order, and the discipline of the senses, but mobility, growth and the enjoyment of life. . . To the Watchmen of the Holy Citadel nothing could have been more insidious." (P. 139). He continues that by 1675 the merchants, "emerging from the constrictions of a medieval social order" (p. 134) and representing "the part of society accustomed to wield political power in England" but denied it in New England, joined with the English authorities to overthrow the wilderness Zion of the Old Chapter and establish royal government. (pp. 160, 176-77). I do not agree.

[60] On the just price in general and Henry of Langenstein in particular see Raymond de Roover, "The Concept of Just Price: Theory and Economic Policy," Journal of Economic History, XVIII (1958), 418-34 with discussion 435-8.

nothing more than the going market price of a product free from monopoly, misrepresentation, or coercion but fully subject to the ordinary factors of supply and demand.[61] That was scarcely a very restrictive notion whatever its "medieval" heritage.

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[61] Aquinas' concept of just price probably amounted to no more than this; certainly the just price came down to that by the sixteenth century. Ibid., pp. 422-24. Cotton specifically stated that "where there is a scarcity of the commodity, there men may raise their price; for now it is a hand of God upon the commodity, and not the person." Winthrop Jl., I, 382. Cf. Samuel Willard, Compleat Body of Divinity, pp. 704-708; Solomon Stodard, An Answer to some Cases of Conscience (Boston: 1722), pp. 1-2. Willard denied commodities had an "Intrisical Value" and held the common market price to be generally the fair one providing no man held a monopoly. Stoddard, the minister of frontier Northampton, applied the concept of "oppression" entirely to rural areas where poor transportation and imperfect marketing and credit facilities allowed retail supply merchants to deceive ignorant countrymen and also to take advantage of the rural buyer's particular necessity to charge well above the going price at the market town. This, it seems to me, indicates what the concept of just price referred to in New England: it was not meant to apply to the wholesale trans-atlantic importer and exporters of Boston, but to the lesser men who did business in rural areas of very imperfect competition. Cf. Ames: ". . . that price is just, if the thing bee sold for so much as it can bee sold for: that is; as it can bee sold for commonly, not out of any affection, or for the profit of this or that man." Cases of Conscience, Works, pp. 236-7 (3rd pag.).

In any case, the General Court did not charge Keayne with violating the just price -- given the practices of the other merchants and the general scarcity he may have been well within it -- but with taking an extortionate profit on both necessities and luxuries at a time of severe scarcity and economic hardship.[62] After nine years of continuous immigration Massachusetts had changed from an empty howling wilderness into a howling wilderness with ten thousand ill-equipped people in it who were dependent on imports from abroad for everything vital to life above the bare subsistence level. Keayne's exploitation of this situation to make large profits would never have endeared him to the other colonists whatever its validity by the standards of the just price, any more than the citizens in a drought-stricken region would find any solace in knowing that a man who charged them exorbitant rates for barreled water had the theory of marginal utility on his side. The Keayne case represents an example of the unavoidable social friction found in any pioneer community in its early days and not the first stage of a nascent conflict between a medieval aristocratic order of magistrates and ministers and a rising class of bourgeois merchants.[63]

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[62] In his will fourteen years later, Keayne changed his defense and instead of claiming he had a false notion of the rules of commerce, argued that he had not in fact charged as high a profit as alleged. Apologia, pp. 298-308.

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[63] Though a law against taking wages or charging prices remained on the books from 1635 on, instances of its enforcement against men selling goods they had not produced themselves (as opposed to artisans taking too high a price for articles they had also manufactured) occur very infrequently. Aside from Keayne the general court also admonished the Boston merchant Robert Sedgwick in 1639 and the Assts. Court fined two individuals for "extortion" the same year (though they may not have been merchants). Further enforcement seems to have been left up to the county courts, which prosecuted rarely if at all. The Essex County Court Records for a fifty year period contain only 4 definite convictions, three of them within six months of each other in 1658. Though the General Court strengthened the law against oppression during King Phillip's War, allegedly increased vigilance produced exactly one individual indicted for extortionate prices in Suffolk County for the whole period 1670-1680 and none at all in Essex County. *Mass. Rec.*, I, 159-160, I, 279; *The Lawes and Liberties of Massachusetts* (ed. Max Farrand; Cambridge, Mass.: 1929), p. 43; John F. Noble and J. F. Cronin ed., *Records of the Court of Assistants of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay* (Boston: 1901-1928), I, 283; *Essex Cty. Ct. Records*, I, 34, II, 69, 100, 118; *Suffolk Cty Ct. Records*, II, 632. Indictments for taking excessive wages occur more frequently, especially in the first decade of settlement, both in the colony records and those of the individual counties, but their total number is relatively small too. Richard B. Morris and Jonathan Grossman have treated this subject (and overemphasized it, in my opinion) in "The Regulation of Wages in Early Massachusetts," *New England Quarterly*, XI (1938), pp. 470-500.

Instead of developing, social divisions between magistrates, ministers and merchants grew smaller as the century progressed. Long before the old charter fell many if not most of the Massachusetts magistrates were merchants. The men who originally filled the offices of governor and assistants had mainly acquired their wealth as members of the English landed aristocracy like Winthrop or as prominent lawyers like Bellingham, but once here some of them, such as William Pynchon, Simon Bradstreet and John Winthrop, Jr., turned to trading as well as farming. In addition, it did not take men primarily engaged in mercantile activity, such as Francis Willoughby and Edward Gibbons, very long to be elected to the magistracy. By 1673 the governor (John Leverett) and at least half of the remaining twelve magistrates were either merchants or deeply involved in mercantile ventures.[64] The merchants as a class could not have opposed the magistrates without opposing themselves.[65]

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[64] Aside from Leverett, Richard Russell, William Hawthorne, Edward Tyng and Thomas Clarke definitely rated as "merchants," while Bailyn considers Simon Bradstreet and Daniel Dennison in that category too (New England Merchants, pp. 125, 163, 165) though most of their money was in land. John Pynchon's case is similar: he was a large landholder but functioned also as a supply merchant and also had money

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in overseas trade. William Stoughton (like his friend Joseph Dudley, who joined the magistracy in 1675) while not a merchant, had close connections with the mercantile community, particularly through the Atherton Company and other ventures in land speculation. In any case both Stoughton and Dudley were prominent "moderates," opposing the Old Charter and favoring royal government. Simon Willard and deputy governor Samuel Symonds probably count as furtraders rather than merchants. Between 1680 and 1686 a total of thirty-one men served as magistrates, and the governor (Simon Bradstreet) and at least thirteen others are classifiable as merchants: besides those already mentioned there were Humphrey Davy, James Russel (Richard's son), John Richards, John Hull, Bartholomew Gedney, Thomas Savage, William Brown, John Hawthorne (William's son), Elisha Hutchinson and Samuel Sewall. Elisha Cooke, related both by marital and financial connection to the merchantile community, and the big three of the "Moderate Party," Stoughton, Dudley, and Peter Bulkeley, might also be included. Bailyn, by contrast, argues (in The New England Merchants, p. 160) that few merchants became magistrates. Lists of the governors and assistants are in Whitmore, The Massachusetts Civil List, pp. 25-26. For biographical information I have used Bailyn's New England Merchants; James Savage, A Geneological Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England (Boston: 1860); and Robert Emmet Wall, Jr., "The Membership of the Massachusetts General Court," (Ms. Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1964).

[65] Bailyn and Michael G. Hall both maintain that the merchants constituted a coherent "moderate party" willing to aid Edmund Randolph in substituting royal government for that of the old charter. Bailyn, New England Merchants, p. 160 ff., Hall, Edmund Randolph and the American Colonies (Chapel Hill: 1960), pp. 58-60. Both rely rather heavily on the reports of Randolph, who was something less

As for the ministry, merchants like Samuel Sewall, Anthony Stoddard and Thomas Brattle sent their sons into it, while the ministers returned the compliment by marrying their daughters to merchants and making merchants of their own sons. So far from being at odds, merchants, magistrates and ministers through family connections and intermarriage

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than a disinterested observer. As Bailyn points out (p. 157) Randolph named fourteen men who "with many others . . . only wait for an opportunity to expresse their duty to his Majestie" and nine of these are merchants. Randolph also named six men who "with some others of the same faction keep the country in subjection and slavery, backed with the pretended authority of a charter" and four of them are merchants too (Governor Leverett and Tyng, Clark and Hawthorne). In any case, Randolph was apt to indulge in wishful thinking: he thought everybody in Massachusetts wanted royal government, even the ministers (whom he describes as "for the most part very civill and inclining to his Majesties government, being held in subjection by the ruling elders, who govern all affairs of the church"). At one point he wrote: "The inhabitants are generally well affected to his Majesties and his government, as well the merchants and farmers as the meaner traders and artificers who grown under the yoake of the present government, and are in dayle hopes and expectations of a change, by his Majesties reassuming the authority and settling a general government over the whole country. . . ." Robert W. Toppan and Thomas S. Goodrich ed., Edward Randolph (Boston: 1898-1909), II, 235, 253, 254, 255. The question of the existence of a moderate party is rather more sensibly treated by Richard S. Dunn, Puritans and Yankees (Princeton: 1962), pp. 212-228.

formed one thoroughly interlocked community.[66] Indeed, merchants occupied so central a position in society's upper stratum as to make Massachusetts more analogous in this respect to contemporary Venice or [illegible] than to England, where the landed gentry still predominated and would continue to do so for another century and more. But unlike the ruling classes of the southern European trading states, the Massachusetts merchants occupied the seats of power in a community where the vast majority of the population engaged in agriculture. Seventeenth century Massachusetts was what its inhabitants always claimed -- unique.

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[66] Four geneologies should indicate the complexity and extent of the inter-connections among magistrates, ministers and merchants. (1) The Rev. John Higginson of Salem (1616-1708): His daughter Sarah married merchant Richard Wharton, while his two sons, John and Nathaniel, became prominent merchants, the latter in India. Higginson himself married as his second wife Mary Atwater, widow of Boston merchant Joshua Atwater and herself the daughter of an English minister. James Savage, A Geneological Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, II, 413-14, I, 76. (2) Governor Simon Bradstreet, merchant and magistrate: the Governor himself was the son of a minister in Lincolnshire, and his own son, also named Simon, became a minister at New London. The Rev. Simon Bradstreet in turn married his first cousin once-removed, Lucy Woodbridge, daughter of the Rev. John Woodbridge (whose mother Mercy was a daughter of Govr. Thomas Dudley and sister to poetess Anne Dudley Bradstreet, Rev. Simon's mother). Another child of Governor Simon, Dorothy, married the Rev. Seaborn Cotton, and their son, also named Seaborn, after entering the ministry took as his wife Ann Lake, daughter of Boston merchant Thomas Lake. Savage, I, 735-6, IV, 631-2, I, 463-4. (3) Richard Russell, magistrate and merchant: his son Daniel was about to assume the pulpit at Charlestown when he died in 1679. Daniel's widow, Mehitabel Willis, granddaughter of Governor John Haynes of Connecticut, married as her second and third husbands the Rev. John Hubbard and the Rev. Samuel Woodbridge, respectively. Mehitabele's mother, widow of Samuel Willis, married Samuel Woodbridge's uncle, the Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, who in turn was the son of Rev. John Woodbridge and the brother to Lucy, wife of the Rev. Simon Bradstreet. Savage, III, 589-90, 593-594, IV, 633; Clifford Shipton ed., Sibley's Harvard Graduates (Cambridge, Mass.: 1873), V, 131-2. (4) Edward Tyng, merchant and magistrate (d. 1681): Edward's daughter Hannah married the merchant

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Habijah Savage (d. 1669) and their daughters Hannah and Mary married the Rev. Nathaniel Gookin and the Rev. Thomas Weld, respectively. But their mother, Hannah Tyng, after Habijah Savage's death married the magistrate Daniel Gookin, father of the Rev. Nathaniel. Another of Edward Tyng's daughters, Deborah, married the magistrate Joseph Dudley (son of Governor Thomas and brother to Anne Bradstreet), while still another daughter, Eunice, married the Rev. Samuel Willard, himself the son of magistrate and furtrader Simon Willard. Edward Tyng's brother William (d. 1652), also a merchant, though not a magistrate, had a daughter Elizabeth who married in 1656 Thomas Brattle, the largest merchant in Boston. Their sons in turn were the famous pair Thomas (1658-1713), merchant and treasurer of Harvard College, and the Rev. William Brattle (1662-1717) of Cambridge. Another of William Tyng's daughters, Ann, married the Rev. Thomas Shepard, while still another, Bethia, became the first wife of merchant Richard Wharton (Sarah Higginson was his second), and a fourth, Mercy, completed the circle by marying Samuel Bradstreet, eldest son of Governor Simon and Ann Bradstreet. Savage, IV, 356-8, I, 238-239. For further complications and connections, all lucidly set down, see Bailyn, New England Merchants, pp. 135-138.

New Englanders probably did not single out commerce as unusually exposed to sinful appetities because just to live in the world as a Puritan was to be so beset on all sides by temptations that no one occupation could seem especially dangerous. The real flaw in Puritan economic teachings lay not in setting medieval farmers against modern merchants, but in setting every man against himself if he sincerely tried to follow the impossible command to immerse himself in the things of this world and yet not set his affections upon them. A man did not have to have Robert Keayne's margin of profit to consider himself covetous; he could take no profit at all and still sin if he delighted in the things of this world in themselves, instead of using them to glorify God. Covetousness was the mother sin, an idolatry deserving eternal death, yet it came terribly close to resembling the most virtuous possible pattern of life, at least as John Cotton described that life:

> For a man to rise early, and goe to bed late, and eate the bread of carefullnesse, not a sinfull, but a provident care, and to avoid idleness, cannot indure to spend and idle time, takes all opportunities to be doing something, early and late, and looseth no opportunity, go anyway and bestir

> himselfe for profit, this will he doe most diligently in his calling: And yet bee a man dead-hearted to the world. . . [67]

Cotton admitted that the work of two men in their callings might appear externally identical and yet the one be a worldling and the other a redeemed saint because the first made earthly things his chief goal while the second as a true Christian improved his talent according to God's law and set his heart and mind on heavenly things. This curious combination of labor "morning and evening, early and late" with "dead-heartedness" to the world Cotton conceded to be "such a mystery as none can read, but they that know it."[68]

Men should grow rich and New England prosperous, saith the preacher -- and in the next breath he added that riches and public prosperity would likely lead to pride, willfulness, vain and idolatrous trust in wealth, luxury "and the following of every affection with contempt of

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[67] *Christ the Fountaine of Life*, pp. 119-20.

[68] *Ibid.*

God."[69] Writing of Plymouth Colony Cotton Mather concluded: "Religion begat prosperity and the daughter devoured the mother." Michael Wigglesworth put it still more tersely: "when creatures smile god is under valew'd."[70]

Men might allowably take some joy in the creatures, but only of a very special sort: "Yee may joy in it with a remisse joy, and ye may also sorrow for it with a remisse sorrow; yee may joy in it as if yee joyed not, and sorrow

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[69] Ames, Cases of Conscience, Works, pp. 253-54 (3rd pag.). Riches were so dangerous according to John Downame, God rarely bestowed them and heavenly happiness together to the same man. "I say rarely, lest any should despaire; and but rarely, and not often, lest any should presume, and thinke that hee may securely, and with ease enjoy both." The Christian Warfare, p. 376. Richard Sibbes held that "The State of Gods Church and Children in the World, for the most part, is to be afflicted and poor in their outward callings" because God saw even in the faithful "a disposition . . . that cannot digest, and manage, and overcome prosperity." Works, VI, 237-38.

[70] Mather, Magnalia Christi Americana (Hartford: 1853), I, 63. Edmund S. Morgan ed., The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, Publ. CSM (Boston: 1951), XXXV, 326. Mather called covetousness "the SIN of the LAND; A sin which Threatens My Own Countrey, as much as any one sin that can be mentioned." A Very Needful Caution (Boston: 1707), p. 50.

in it as if yee sorrowed not."[71] A forceful paradox, but then one man's paradox is another's contradiction. Just how could a man live actively in the world and still not "live to" it? It all depended on his attitude,[72] but he had to judge his attitude by a standard which almost always required him to bring in a verdict of guilty. It was not that the Puritan economic ethic somehow "unleashed" covetousness, that it aroused an impulse that went beserk, but rather that when it came to translating the subtle distinctions of the treatises into a working guide for actual conduct the difference between covetous affection and diligent zeal could be grasped only by a mental contortionist. The more a man sincerely tried to fulfill the ideal, the more he would be forced into self-denunciation.

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[71] John Preston, *A Remedy Against Covetousnesse, Foure Godly and Learned Treatises,* p. 23.

[72] Merely using lawful means in procuring wealth did not exonerate men from covetousness -- "The love of wealth for the satisfying of the flesh is unlawful, whatever the means be." Indeed, a man could be a [redacted] and yet be content only with what he had if he "overloved" it. Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory,* p. 256.

A remarkable individual like John Winthrop might bring it off, but he was as Israel Stoughton said "indeed a man of men." More often the paradoxes of Puritan teachings led to the tortured and insufferably repetitious self-recriminations of a Michael Wigglesworth. That worthy's diary consists of one long lamentation for his sins, none of which involved sinful external conduct, but which almost exclusively consisted of pride, sensuality, and above all "whoorish desertions of my heart from God to the creature."[73] Wigglesworth spent so much time excoriating himself he may have actually believed he really was (as he called himself) "the chief of sinners." In point of fact he was only the dullest.

Not only could each individual keep a diary like Wigglesworth in which he might accuse himself of love of the creatures and failing to heed the lord, but the ministry arraigned the whole of New England collectively for the same sins in their sermons. Urian Oakes called worldliness "an

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[73] Wigglesworth Diary, p. 336.

Epidemical disease of New England" in 1673, while two years before Samuel Danforth cried that "Pride, Contention, Worldliness, Covetousness, Luxury, Drunkenness and Uncleannesse breaks in like a flood upon us, and good Men grow cold in their love to God and to one another." Danforth was sure he saw calamity approaching because "Inordinate worldly cares, predominant Lusts, and malignant Passions and Distempers stifle and choak the Word, and quench our affections to the Kingdom of God."[74]

The second and third generations in New England liked to flatter themselves by thinking they had degenerated from the irreproachable behavior of the founding generation, but that group of individuals did not think itself exempt from the standard catalogue of Puritan sins. John Cotton, who had seen the Arbella off in 1630 with the observation that material as well as spiritual prosperity showed God's blessings, some years later wrote of "this countrey, wherein men that have left all to enjoy the Gospel now (as if they had forgoteen the end for which they come hither) are ready to leave the gospel for outward things." As early as March 13, 1638/9, the Massachusetts General Court declared a day of humiliation because of the prevalence of "Novelties, oppression, atheisme, excesse, superfluity, idleness, contempt of authority."[75]

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[74] Urian Oakes, New England Pleaded With (Cambridge, Mass.: 1674), p. 33; Samuel Danforth, A Brief Recognition of New-England's Errand into the Wilderness (Cambridge, Mass.: 1671), pp. 10-16. Perry Miller brilliantly anatomized this type of literature, the "Jeremiad" as he named it, in The New England Mind, From Colony to Province (Boston: 1961), pp. 27-39 and in the title essay of Errand into the Wilderness (New York: 1964), pp. 1-15.

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[75] Cotton, Gods Promise to His Plantations (London: 1630), reprinted in Old South Leaflets, No. 53, pp. 11-13; A Briefe Exposition with Practical Observations Upon the Whole Book of Ecclesiastes (London: 1654), p. 1. Mass. Rec., I, 253. Earlier, in New England's First Fruits (London: 1643), New England's prosperity had been cited as a sign of God's approval of the colony. Reprinted in Samuel Eliot Morrison, The Founding of Harvard College (Cambridge, Mass.: 1935), pp. 440-446. On the "degeneration" of the first generation see also Charles Chauncey, Gods Mercy Shewed To His People In Giving Them a Faithful Ministry and Schools of Learning for the Continual Supplyes Thereof (Cambridge, Mass.: 1655), pp. 18-21; Thomas Shepard, Wine for Gospel Wantons (Boston: 1668), p. 13. The latter was a sermon delivered in 1645. It would be almost as easy to write a history of seventeenth century New England in terms of the "declension" of the first generation as (the way it is usually done) in terms of the apostacy of the second and third. Indeed, Darrett[redacted] has recently been kind enough to do just that in Winthrop's Boston. [redacted] believes he has broken with all previous

The same men who saw themselves as preoccupied with worldly goods and alienated from God also relished "affliction" because it returned their affections to the proper place. If men doted on the creatures the Lord would show them the frailty and transitoriness of all earthly things by taking them away. He sent all sorts of financial reverses, natural disasters, mortalities, plagues, famines, Indian wars and other horrors, all to restore New England and individual New Englanders to a dependance solely on Him. "Prosperity" as Samuel Sewall confided to a friend, "is too fullsom a diet for any man . . . unless seasoned with some grains of adversity."[76] Much earlier John Winthrop made a point of entering into his journal the cautionary tale of "A Godly Women" of Boston who doted overmuch on her fine linen. A providential accident destroyed it, "But it pleased God that the loss of the linen did her much

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historical interpretations when, in fact, he has merely speeded up their timetable.

[76] Samuel Sewall to Daniel Gookin, 16 March 1671/2, 6 Coll. MHS, I, 17.

good, both in taking off her heart from worldly comforts, and in preparing her for a far greater affliction by the untimely death of her husband."[77]

Again and again Puritans used the metaphor of a purging or purifying fire to describe affliction and considered it a thing to be welcomed: "I consider affliction is Gods furnace, it shall purge away filth; so that I shall be fitter [redacted] to live better, or dy happier, having a weightier crown of glory."[78] Though God's people might initially resent his chastisements, according to Urian

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77. Winthrop Jl., II, 36. The entry occurs c. May, 1644. When two citizens of Springfield drowned in 1645 while on their way to market corn and other goods, William Pynchon wrote John Winthrop "I think it is the meere hand of god and therefore I hope the Lord will help us to search our waies and labor for more weanednesse from these empty creatures that are so uncertaine." Winthrop Papers, V, 50.

78. Wigglesworth Diary, p. 407. Cf. George Fenwick to John Winthrop, 17 March 1646/7: "The lord hath not yett mad an end with [afflicting] his churches his peple have yett too much dross to come out of the fier and this there comfort they can loose noething by it, but what they will rejoyce to have taken away: I never knew a saint loose by his sufferings nor a wicked man gaine by outward mercies." Winthrop Papers, V, 142.

Oakes, they soon realized that they were proofs of his particular love to them: "When they come to themselves and see how righteous it is with God, how profitable to themselves, they recover themselves, and say, it is good for them to be afflicted; because theyreby they are reduced from their strayings, into the way of obedience."[79]

Self-accusation and the love of affliction represented for most New Englanders the only resolution to that mass of paradoxes and tensions that went under the name of Puritanism. Historians for some reason have taken their pronouncements of declining times at face value and so written either enthusiastically or occasionally tragically of the decline of the wilderness zion and the subsidence of piety in greed and worldliness. But except by the Puritans' own impossible and contradictory standards this is not necessarily the case, any more than Michael Wigglesworth's judgement of himself as the "chief of sinners" is an accurate statement of fact. No man could fulfill the Puritan economic ideal and still have a favorable opinion of himself because its definition of sin came so close to its ideal of virtue that fallible men would invariably pass back and forth from one to the other. Even contemporaries realized that. Men were *supposed* to condemn themselves and they sinned all the more if they did not:

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[79] Urian Oakes, *A Seasonable Discourse Wherein Sincerity & Delight in the Service of God is earnestly pressed upon Professors of Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1682), p. 21.

> [Those] that are not sick of themselves and their aversness and indisposition to Gods service, are doubtless weary of God. For experience shews that the best of Gods People have their weary fits; much of what we have spoken of, weariness of God and His sevice, may be applyed to the sincere faithfull servants of God at sometimes, and in some pangs of temptation. . . . But then they do not allow themselves in it, but judge and condemn themselves for it. [80]

So long as New Englanders continued to denounce themselves, so long as they were sure they had deserted their ideal, they were faithful to it. Only when they *stopped* mourning for their worldliness and no longer felt a sense of guilt about the way they lived in the world had at least one part of the Protestant ethic given way to the spirit of capitalism.

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[80] *Ibid.*, pp. 26-28.

In a real sense New England was founded so that it might decline. From the first it was to be a New Israel and the story of the twelve tribes, new or old, would be incomplete without a concluding tale of the falling away from God, of the wrath of Jehovah, of temporary revivals and finally of ultimate failure. No part of the Bible was dearer to the Puritan heart than the first half of *Jeremiah*; New Englanders loved the majestic rhythms of the Prophets towering rages, the solemn and awful cadences in which he arraigned Israel's sin and declension. From *Jeremiah* the ministers of the second and third generations derived the literary form that served as the Puritan equivalent of the confessional, a ritual chastisement of the self told as the story of the congregation's apostacy from the ways of their ancestors. It suited the needs of those who heard it well enough, but those needs did not include an accurate description of the development of New England Society. They had not really fallen away, they only suffered from paradoxes inherited from their fathers. In trying to understand themselves they (and the modern historians who have written of them) might have been better advised to abandon *Jeremiah* now and then to take their texts from *Ecclesisates*: Say not thou, What is *the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this. (*Eccl*. 7: 10)

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC (II): POVERTY, DEPRESSION, POOR RELIEF AND CHARITY

I. Poverty in Theory: The Comfortable Benefit of Afflictions

Though the New England preacher's advice sometimes resembled Iago's -- "put money in your purse" -- there were members of his flock who through bad fortune or their own incompetence grew not rich but poor and even a few who had to depend on the charity of their fellows just to stay alive. No one experiencing the uncertainties of life in the seventeenth century could doubt that the Lord made men poor as well as rich, that he sent affliction as well as prosperity. Certain modern writers to the contrary, Puritan theory did not teach that the godly would invariably prosper or that the poor were innately vicious.[1] A just god reigned in the world, but since the fall no man dared ask for justice alone, and R.H. Tawney's version of the

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[1] The theory that Puritanism identified poverty with sin, that "like the friends of Job, it saw in misfortune, not the chastisement of love, but the punishment of sin," usually calls up the name of Max Weber, but as a matter of fact he never clearly maintained that at all. Weber noticed and made use of the passages in Puritan and Calvinist writers that held that "God probably allows so many people to remain poor because He knows that they would not be able to withstand the temptations that go with wealth." The closest he came to the doctrine for which he has suffered considerable criticism was an ambiguous footnote: "The analogy between the unjust

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(according to human standards) predestination of only a few and the equally unjust, but equally divinely ordained, distribution of wealth, was too obvious to be escaped. . . . Furthermore, as for Baxter . . . poverty is very often a symptom of sinful slothfulness." That passage does not necessarily mean that the states of reprobation and poverty were identical, but only that apparently arbitrary poverty like apparently arbitrary damnation actually conformed to a mysterious but deliberate divine plan, the purpose of which was known only by God himself. This, in fact, was the only point made by the section of Weber's text to which the passage just cited was a footnote. Weber came closer to arguing that Calvinists identified virtue and financial success, but even here he realized that they held riches shot full of temptations; he only pointed out that while they distrusted the state of wealth they sanctified the process of money-making. The Protestant Ethic, 156-157, 163, 172, 174, 177-178, 281 (notes 102, 103).

The passage cited at the beginning of this note comes from R.H. Tawney (Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p. 219), who did write that Puritanism had the effect of making poverty synonymous with sin and riches with virtue (his full discussion comes in the section entitled "The New Medicine for Poverty," pp. 210-226). Margaret James attempted to prove a similar case in Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution 1640-1660 (London: 1930), pp. 15-22, 241-302. Michaelsen took a similar (though distinctly less sophisticated) view of the problem of Puritanism and the poor, but he claimed the mentality Tawney described appeared only in the later and more decadent stages of the Puritan movement ("Changes in the Puritan Concept of Calling," p. 234). None of the three introduced any direct evidence that the Puritans held the particular theories they attributed to them. Tawney and

Puritan Jehovah did not always conform to the Rev. Samuel Willards: "as Riches are not Evidences of God's Love, so

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James could come up with nothing more than contemporary denunciations of idle beggars; Michaelsen just cited Tawney and James. As it happens Puritan writers did make explicit statements in profusion that absolutely denied any necessary correlation between adversity and sin. The indirect evidence, the contention that the poor laws and private charity collapsed during and after the Interregnum, is not accurate. The poor rates actually brought in more money during the Civil War and Protectorate than before it, and charitable giving, though it fell off between 1640 and 1650, remained substantial and began to recover its former magnitude in the decade 1650-1660. See Wilbur K. Jordan, Philanthropy in England 1480-1660 (London: 1959), pp. 137-139, 245, 369 (table).

.Finally, lest I be accused of committing the same mistake for which I criticized Weber's opponents in the previous chapter, I must admit that it is conceivable that Puritanism could foster such an attitude at the same time that it explicitly condemned it. When Puritan theorists denounced "covetousness," however, they simultaneously advocated an activity which they admitted to be externally identical to it, differing only in its motivation. There is no analogy in Puritan thinking on affliction: most writers not only denied that the afflicted were by definition sinful, they went on to describe how profitable the elect would find their afflictions.

neither is *Poverty* of His Anger or *Hatred*; being such things as in themselves make Men neither better nor *worse*; and are equally improvable for Eternal Salvation."[2] As usual Willard merely reiterated a doctrinal commonplace in a particularly concise and lucid way. Over fifty years earlier, in the first half of the seventeenth century, John Cotton had been just as categorical. "No man can certainly discern the love or hatred of God to himself or others, by their outward events or estates" he wrote in an exposition on *Ecclesiastes* and proceeded to fill a page with Biblical examples to prove it.[3]

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[2] *Compleat Body of Divinity*, p. 708.

[3] *A Brief Exposition on Ecclesiastes*, pp. 96-97. Other instances of the same position occur regularly in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. *Cf*. Perkins, "A Commentarie or Exposition upon the Five First Chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians," *Works*, II, 313; Arthur Hildersham, *Lectures upon the Fourth of John*, pp. 394-7; Thomas Hooker, *The Christians Two Chiefe Lessons, Viz Selfe-Deniall, And Selfe-Tryall* (London: 1640), p. 65; Samuel Moodey, *The Debtor's Monitor*, pp. 24-25. William Hubbard can have the last word: "The person is the same, though he pass through the differing *changes* of Youth and Age, single and married Estate; publick and private, prosperous and adverse estate; in ever of which *changes*, he ought to order his way aright." *The Benefit of a Well-Ordered Conversation*, pp. 16-17.

William Ames had laid down the line on poverty with admirable precision at about the same time. Praying for poverty or giving away all to live on alms Ames viewed as "a madnesse to bee condemned," not to say a popish abomination, but involuntary poverty he held neither shameful nor unlawful for those who suffered it. As in all estates, that of poverty had its peculiar temptations. The devil might prompt a poor man to despair, to murmur against God's providence, to use unlawful means to relieve himself, or to envy others, but once these snares were overcome poverty, with the grace of God, could prove just as good a path to salvation as prosperity.[4]

The Puritan thought of poverty the same way he thought of all affliction, as heaven sent but neutral. A man judged his spiritual estate not by the afflictions that befell him, but by the use he put them to. "Tis true, that all kinds of crosses fall alike to all, sicnesse, poverty, & c. upon the godly and the wicked; the difference is onely in the issue. . . . Consider therefore whether thy afflictions brings [sic] thee home to the Lord, or whether it drives thee from the Lord upon the rockes."[5] Afflictions came to try a man's faith, to wean him from vain and empty creatures, or even to punish him for his sins, but whatever the cause the elect would find them profitable and, in John Cotton's words, "the fruits of Gods Fatherly love." A man under affliction had to follow a simple but demanding rule of behavior: ". . . be carefull to come better out of affliction then you went in; what proud, impatient, and covetous when you went in, and come sow out? God forbid, desire God rather never to leave you, till you get some good by the afflictions you undergoe."[6]

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[4] *Cases of Conscience*, pp. 251-3.

John Preston did write that though God sent some afflictions for trial, "yet for the most part they come from sinne,"[7] but his readers understood that no man escaped sin and that since all men stood in need of purification, punishment itself properly used became a blessing. Preston's contemporary, John Downame, pointed out that even the regenerate received only what they deserved no matter what blows God rained on them, for before they received grace they too partook fully in the universal human corruption and even in their gracious state they had to pay for their former sins.[8] Affliction fell on the just and the unjust alike, coming to the one in fatherly chastisement and to the other in vengeance. Only the afflicted himself, through examination of his response, could tell to which group he belonged. Downame had charity enough to caution his readers not to judge themselves reprobate merely because they did not seem to profit by their reverses and used "inconsiderate speeches" when suffering under them. A man had to evaluate his spiritual state and its improvement after his affliction ceased just as he determined his bodily strength only in times of health and not of disease.[9]

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[5] John Preston, The Golden Sceptor Held Forth to the Humble (London: 1638), pp. 288-89. A sinner who did not suffer affliction could only conclude that the Lord had abandoned him to destruction. Ibid., p. 290. On the neutrality of afflictions cf. Downame, The Christian Warfare, pp. 858-60.

[6] Cotton, The Way of Life, pp. 471, 479.

[7] The Golden Sceptor, pp. 290-291.

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8. The Christian Warfare, p. 841.

9. Ibid., pp. 94-95.

Having vigorously repudiated the Catholic tenet of the holy nature of poverty, the Puritans indirectly revived it again in preaching "the comfortable benefit of afflictions." Obliged to distrust prosperity at the same time he was enjoined to seek it, the believer could only welcome anything that disturbed his enjoyment of the creatures as withdrawing "that which is the fuel of sin." Wrote Richard Sibbes in a passage enthusiastically seconded on both sides of the Atlantic for the next two centuries:

> . . . what doth our sinful disposition feed on? Upon pleasures, and vanities, upon the honours of this life, and Riches, & c. Now when affliction either takes these things away, or embitters them if we have them, then that which sin carries us to, and that we fed our own base earthly lusts with, being gone, when a man is stripped of these, he begins to know himself what he is, he was drunk before. I deem a man in prosperity little better than drunk. He knows neither God nor himself, nor the world. . . . But when affliction comes, and withdraws and strips him of those things that made him fierce against God, then he begins to know God, and to tremble at the judgements of God when he begins to smart. . . . And then he knows the world indeed as a vain world. Blessed be the affliction that makes us know a gracious and good God, and the creature to be a vain creature, and ourselves out of the favour of God to be nothing. You see what afflictions will do.[10]

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[10] "The Churches Complaint and Confidence," Works, VI, 184. This sermon originally appeared in 1639. Cf. Downame, The Christian Warfare, pp. 913-14.

Poverty had its temptations, and severe ones at that, but prosperity had many more. Hooker did not feel the least bit popish in declaring "Adversity is a *safer condition* for a *Christian* man, than Prosperity," anymore than Thomas Shepard thought himself cynical in writing in his diary that "Men are better generally under the Rod, than under mercy. We see what an Admirable Spirit there is under sore Afflictions, which Men cannot attain to or keep, but then."[11] By direct consequence, in Sibbes' words, "the state of God's church and children in the world, for the most part, is to be afflicted and poor in their outward condition,"[12] and that nation which considered itself the godliest in the world could hardly avoid taking pride in its underdeveloped economy -- when it was not calling on the fact that it had an economy at all to witness its contention that God had given His blessing to the New England Way. John Eliot, the famous "Apostle to the Indians, told a wiseacre brave who wanted to know why if the New Englanders were so godly they were not rich, "that God knows it is better for his children to be good than to be rich; he knows withal, that if some of them had riches they would abuse them, and wax proud and wanton, etc., therefore he gives them no more riches than may be needful for them, that they may be kept from pride, etc., to depend upon him."[13]

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[11] Hooker, *A Treatise of Self-Denyall,* p. 70; Shepard, *Three Valuable Pieces* (Boston: 1747), p. 12. Downame also [redacted] adversity "farre lesse dangerous" than prosperity. *The Christian Warfare*, p. 90.

[12] "The Rich Poverty: or the Poore Mans Riches," in *Works,* VI, 237-8. The sermon was first issued in 1638.

Abject poverty, the inability to maintain oneself on one's own income, the New Englanders feared as much as any men,[13a] but a very moderate financial competence punctuated by periodic reverses had a curious attraction for them. Ezekiel Cheever, Boston's great school master, had lived in the world ninety-four years, most of them in New England, when on his deathbed in 1708 he gave Samuel Sewall a farewell exhortation that summarized not only his but the whole of the Puritan colonies' experience: "The Afflictions of God's people, God by them did as a Goldsmith, Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock, Knock, to finish the plate: It was to perfect them not to punish them." Two days later he was dead.[14]

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[13] *Winthrop Jl.*, II, 370-71.

[13a] Thus Cotton Mather prayed in 1686 at the age of 24 that "I might have a comfortable *Habitation* provided for mee, and that the Lord, my glorious Master would afford mee, all Conveniences, without the Distresses and Temptations, which *Poverty* does expose unto." He admitted, however, in good Puritan fashion "that I count myself *unworthy* of the least Bitt of Bread; that I must own, I have given way to the lusts whereof *Penury* is the just punishment." *Mather Diary*, I, 124.

Cheever's attitude was not restricted to superannuated school teachers and apostles to the Indians. William Coddington, a merchant, early Massachusetts and Rhode Island magistrate and founder of Newport, knew the meaning of the loss of his barn, farm house, and livestock during the severe winter of 1643-44 as well as any writer of treatises: ". . . the Lord hath begunne to let me see by experience that a mans comfort doth not depend in the multetude of those things he doth possesse. . . ."[15] Financial loss hurt as much then as now, but men interpreted their pain differently.

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[14] Sewall Diary, II, 230. The habit of relishing afflictions extended beyond New England and survived the seventeenth century by a long period. Richard Henry Lee of Virginia wrote Samuel Adams on February 2, 1776 concerning "our ill fortune in Canada": "Those who sail gently down the smooth stream of prosperity, are very apt to loose that energetic virtue so necessary to true happiness. It seems that discipline, and pretty severe discipline too, is necessary for the depraved heart of man, nor have we any right to expect security in the enjoyment of the greatest human blessings until we have learnt wisdom and moderation in the school of adversity." James Curtis Ballagh ed., The Letters of Richard Henry Lee (New York: 1911), I, 167-8.

II. Mass Poverty: The Theory of Depressions

When individual hardship multiplied wholesale, be it in plague, famine, or depression, the same theory of affliction was invoked on a massive scale. God improved whole countries as well as single inhabitants, and that people whom he loved could expect the greatest amount of fatherly correction. "To turn Blessings into Idols, is the way to have them clap'd under a Blast: If the Lord loves his People, he will deliver those Weapons out of their hands, that they are obstinately resolved to fight Him with. . . . Better is it that Israel be saved and Prosperity lost, than that Prosperity be Saved and Israel lost."[16]

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[15] William Coddington to John Winthrop, 5 August 1644, Winthrop Papers, IV, 489-490. Another correspondent of Winthrop's, writing to him of her financial troubles in 1629, concluded her letter: "I hope the lord in his good tyme will free me from all these troubles. my desire is to make the right use of them to which end I humbly intreat the help of your holy prayers. . ." Anne Gibson to John Winthrop, 19 April 1629, Winthrop Papers, II, 81. *Cf*. the merchant William Pierce to Governor Bradford of New Plymouth, 25 December 1632, History of Plymouth Plantation, II, 155-6.

More concerned with promoting morality than commerce, Puritan economic thought often seems incomprehensible today. Cotton Mather's Concio ad Populum, a lecture sermon delivered to the Massachusetts General Court in 1719, laid the blame for the hard times that apparently followed the Peace of Utrecht on the fact that New Englanders were living too well, over-indulging themselves on luxuries. By way of remedy, "the GRAND EXPEDIENT, is, Frugality," "a discrete, a Righteous, a needful FRUGALITY, in our Domestick Expences: more particularly a Frugality in our Habits."

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[16] John Danforth, The Vile Prophanations of Prosperity by the Degenerate Among the People of God (Boston: 1704), p. 9.

Though Mather demanded the rich should lead the colony into frugality by their example, it was the poor, those living beyond their means, to whom he gave his strongest admonition: ". . . It is to be demanded of the Poor, that they do not indulge in an Affectation of making themselves in all things appear equal with the Rich: But patiently submit unto the Difference, which the Maker of you Both, has put between you." At the same time he closed his discourse with the traditional rejoicing in New England's lack of affluence, giving thanks that "in Our Time, such is the Constitution of the Country, that many Great Estates must not soon be raised in it." Great estates would produce only a vanity so immense as to proclaim to all the Lord's children "Depart, For this is not your Rest; It is Polluted." But contentment with a decent estate, frugality and industry would combined cure the depression and lead to "good manners," "moral honesty" and a favorable balance of trade.[17]

Mather had simply reiterated the old distrust of the creatures under the guise of macroeconomics, but just that approach appealed to a country whose elected legislature four years later banned "extravagant" expenditures on funerals "when the circumstances of the province so loudly calls [sic] for all sorts of frugality."[18] Debate over the great economic issue of the first half of the eighteenth century, the issuing of paper money in inflationary quantities, often centered on the same hostility to creature comforts and the same esteem for frugality. In 1726 the author of "A Speech without-doors touching the Morality of Emitting more Paper Bills," a secular tract, not a sermon, argued against further issues mainly under the banner of frugality. His pamphlet claimed that the inevitable result of fiat money was that "the Affectation and use of Gayety, Costly Building, '[Dis]Stilled and other Strong Liquors, Palatable though Unhealthy Diet, Rageth with great Impetuosity, and in (its to be feared) in [sic] all orders and Degrees of Men."[19] A modern might call a state in which all classes could indulge in "gayety" and costly buildings prosperity; seventeenth and early eighteenth century New Englanders labelled it "luxury" and considered it vice.

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[17] Concio ad Populum (Boston: 1719), pp. 10-14, 27.

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[18] Acts and Resolves, II, 229-30. The act was renewed in 1724 and strengthened in 1742. Ibid., II, 336, 1086.

[19] Sewall Papers, II, 235-239. The author of the piece may have been still another Mather, Warham of New Hampshire.

III. Poverty in Reality: Poor Relief and Private Charity[19a]

For all their ambivalence and even outright hostility towards prosperity, New Englanders had no desire to become so poor as to have to live off the bounty of others and they did not quite know what to do with those inhabitants who did get themselves into that state. They did not as Puritans consider the desperately poor necessarily sinful or reprobate, yet they did as taxpayers fiercely resent contributing for their support. Somewhat grudgingly but effectively they adopted the English system of poor relief with certain peculiar variations, the product of the changed conditions of the New World and of the Puritanism of its inhabitants.

[19a] Some aspects of this subject have received detailed treatment elsewhere and I will not repeat matter others have covered except in summary or where I differ from or wish to supplement a previous work. Citations to these sources will be given at the appropriate places in the text. The most detailed treatment of New England's system of poor relief is Robert W. Kelso, The History of Public Poor Relief in Massachusetts 1620-1920 (Boston: 1922), which gives an adequate outline of the mechanisms of public welfare in colonial Massachusetts but otherwise leaves a great deal to be desired. Kelso was not an historian but an individual interested in the problems of social work and welfare in Massachusetts of the 1920's and he not only lumped the details of poor relief in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries together indiscriminately in his book, but as the last page of the text indicates he let special pleading warp the whole work. He believed that hereditary mental retardation was the main cause of pauperism and that the way to eliminate it was to stop the paupers from reproducing. In order to strengthen the case for his solution he consequently went out of his way to show that all other systems of public poor relief had ended in disaster, an approach that did not make for the most accurate or disinterested scholarship. The book badly needs redoing.

The laws of New England followed those of the mother country in distinguishing between the worthy poor, who could not earn enough to live on, and the idle poor, individuals able to work but not willing to.[20] The second class presented some problems in law enforcement but none in ethics. "As for your Common Beggar 'tis usually an Injury and a Dishonour unto the Country, for them to be countenanced; as for those that Indulge themselves in Idleness, the Express Command of God unto us, is That you should Let them Starve."[21] Idlers should be forced to work and the recalcitrant punished, sent to the house of correction or even deported. The proper authorities were quite prepared to enforce the laws ruthlessly as many an idle fellow found out. In 1672 Steven Hoppine of Dorchester, living idly and singly, discovered to his cost what it was to trifle with his town selectmen. Ordered by them to find employment he put them off with evasions and outright lies until they lost their patience and had him sent to the Suffolk County House of Correction to be kept at hard labor until "he bee orderly settled in some convenient service according to Law."[22] Eleven years later another Suffolk County idler, William Batt of Boston, proved even more incorrigible, resisting every effort of the Boston selectmen to set him at work, so that they applied for and received power to ship him off to the West Indies.[23]

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[20] Mass. Rec., I, 264; II, 180, 199; IV, Pt. 1, 230, 365; Pt. 2, 43. Acts and Resolves, I, 67-68, 378-381, 452-53, 538-9. The General Laws and Liberties of New-Plymouth Colony (Cambridge, Mass.: 1672), pp. 27, 29-30. The Book of the General Laws for the People within the Jurisdiction of Connecticut (Cambridge, Mass.: 1673), pp. 31, 57. Acts and Laws, of His Majesties Colony of Connecticut in New-England (New London: 1715), pp. 54, 94. Acts and Laws of His Majesties Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations in America, p. 10.

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[21] Cotton Mather, Durable Riches (Boston: 1695), p. 20. Cf. Perkins, "Cases of Conscience," Works, II, 144-5; Downame, The Plea of the Poore, pp. 38-39.

Towards vagabonds, idle persons who wandered from town to town, "thereby drawing away children, servants and other persons both younger and elder, from their lawfull callings and imployments, and hardening the hearts of one another against all subjection to the rules of Gods holy word and the established lawes of all this colony,"[24] New England justice could be yet more savage. The Essex County Court having adjudged Simond Foster and his wife wandering persons in 1679, it ordered them conveyed out of the colony by being whipped from town to town at the back of a cartail.[25]

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[22] Boston Rec., IV, 158, 176, 177. Suffolk County Court Rec., I, 89. For other instances of individuals sent to the house of correction or "disposed to service" as punishment for idleness see Town Records of Salem (Salem: 1868), pp. 124, 140, 142, 150; Suffolk County Court Rec., I, 231, 258; Essex County Court Rec., II, 57; Inferior Court of Pleas, pp. 108, 132.

[23] Boston Rec., VII, 162. John Smith was similarly expelled from the colony in 1677. Suffolk Cty. Ct. Rec., I, 871.

[24] Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. 2, 43.

Cartails and bridewells would do for the unworthy poor, criminals who could support themselves and would not, but that still left some people who would support themselves and yet could not. These the New England colonies held entitled to public assistance from the towns in which they legally resided if they qualified as "impotent" poor: orphans, widows, unwed mothers and men incapacitated by sickness, age, lunacy or the like. The third class of poor recognized by the English laws, the willing, able-bodied poor who could not find work and for whom parish officials were to provide public employment, had no place in the New England legislative system or the New England mentality, principally because (with the great exception of the poor of Boston) they did not exist.[25a] Whatever the conditions causing poverty in seventeenth century England, they had no equivalent on the other side of the Atlantic, where the Puritan colonies suffered from a chronic and intense labor shortage. Governor William Leete of Connecticut's answer to a Board of Trade query about poverty in 1680 might just as well have applied to the whole of New England: "Every town maintains its own poor: But there is seldom any want, because labour is dear . . . [and] because provisions are cheap. . . ."[26] No statutes provided for local officials to set the willing poor at work making hemp and no person presented for idleness or living without a calling dared defend himself by claiming he could not find employment.[26a] The

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[25] Essex Cty. Ct. Rec., VII, 328.

[25a] English Puritans did recognize that a man could need relief and yet be able-bodied. "But the poore upon whom the godly and blessed man doth exercise his benificence, is the honest laborer and the poore housholder,

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who either through the greatnesse of their charge, or badnesse of their trade, crosses, losses, sicnesse, suretiship, or other casualties being brought behinde hand, are not able in the sweate of their face to earne their bread." Downame, Plea of the Poor, pp. 39-40.

[26] I Coll. MHS, IV, 222.

[26a] The selectment of Watertown had only to look at the way Samuel Benjamine was dressed in 1653 to conclude him an idler: "Samuel Benjamine was presented before us for Idleness . . . which Did two evidently apeare by his ragged clothes. . . ." Watertown Records (Watertown: 1894-1939), I, 33. Any-[illegible]-bodied man willing to work could have afforded better dress.

town selectmen would have had no trouble in supplying the want. "If the Poor will but Work," wrote Cotton Mather, "they would make a better hand of it in this country, than in almost any under the Cope of Heaven. What a pity it is, that such an Hive should have any Drones in it."[27]

Thanks to dear labor, cheap provisions and plentiful land a people who prided themselves on their poverty had few actual paupers among them. Watertown was paying £ 26 for its poor in 1671 and £ 70 in 1736, Salem less than £ 25 in 1657, Charlestown £ 10 in 1655 and £ 35 in 1711, Dorchester no more than £ 8 1/2 in 1662 and only £ 17 in 1674, while Springfield had less than a £ 70 bill for the poor as late as 1730.[28] The numbers of paupers involved were obviously not large, since even a healthy poor person needed at least £ 5 and generally £ 10 - £ 12 a year for his maintenance, while doctor bills might drive that figure considerably higher; one invalid accounted for a full £ 28 of Watertown's

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[27] Concio ad Populum, p. 15.

[28] Watertown Records, I, 108-9, III, 135, 146-48; Salem Records, p. 204; Frothingham, History of Charlestown, pp. 149-50, 246; Boston Rec., IV, 115-16, 202, 205; Springfield Rec., II, 459-463.

£ 70 expense in 1736. Even Boston, which later developed a massive relief problem, laid out only £ 53 for welfare in 1654, £ 26 of it in tax abatements. No baby was left abandoned on a Boston doorstep until November 4, 1685.[29]

The small number of actual paupers must have brought little compensation to New Englanders, who found the figures for the cost of their maintenance (and the loss in revenue through tax abatements) quite large enough. Like the contemporary English ratepayers, although they gave generously to charity, they had little liking for paying even small public charges. Unlike their English contemporaries, however, they did pay. The colonists came out of an English background where the primary responsibility for care of the poor fell on private charity, principally the income from charitable trusts established by the legacies of individual philanthropists. The state had enforced the elaborate mechanism of the Tudor-Stuart poor laws only to supplement these private bequests, and when it tried to do more, as in the decade before the calling of the Long Parliament, the ratepayers resisted strenuously and with effect.[30] In New England, by contrast, private charity only supplemented the local rates, voted and paid for by the fellow townsmen of the individual needing relief. Like ignorance and illiteracy, poverty was regarded as an essentially public evil, remediable at public charge.

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[29] Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, pp. 218-20; Sewall Diary, I, 103.

Though some New Englanders did leave money as capital bequests rather than for outright distribution, given the state of the colonial economy charitable trusts proved neither necessary nor very practical: the trustees found very few safe investments yielding a good return.[31]

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[30] On the English tradition of poor relief see Jordan, English Philanthropy, pp. 126-142, 240-263.

[31] When Major John Richards left a legacy "to be improved for the poor" in 1694 the selectment of Boston could think of no better way to invest it than to use it to refinish the upstairs of a local store as a chamber for rent. Boston Rec., VII, 226. Leaving land was equally bad: New England land titles were so confused the heirs often inherited nothing more than a law suit, and even if they had clear title they had trouble renting it when freeholds were available at little or no cost. S.E. Morison, The Founding of Harvard College (Cambridge, Mass.: 1935), pp. 322-24.

Massachusetts significantly passed no law during the entire colonial period corresponding to the Elizabethan Statute of Charitable Uses and very little legislation on trusts in general as opposed to the extremely complicated body of charity law that developed at the same time in England.[32] While New Englanders gave substantial amounts in charity during their life times, particularly through church collections, they left relatively little in their wills for the relief of poverty or any other benevolent purpose. In the ten years 1651-60, a decade when many leading members of the first generation died and the New England economy attained some degree of stability, the citizens of Essex County left the unimpressive total sum of £ 5 for the benefit of the poor.[33] Suffolk County, which included

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[32] On English charity law see Jordan, English Philanthropy, pp. 109-125; David Owen, English Philanthropy 1660-1960 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1964), pp. 70-71.

[33] This has been determined by a survey of The Probate Records of Essex County Massachusetts (Salem: 1916-20) for the appropriate years. The only legacies for the poor are in I, 218, 223. Total gifts for charity amounted to £ 12.8s., an annuity for Harvard of unspecified amount and a cow. I, 128, 141, 207, 235. Secondary legacies have not been counted in these or other figures if

Boston, did rather better with £ 238.6s.8d., but two individuals, the merchants Robert Keayne and Henry Webb, accounted for £ 225 of that amount between them.[34] Keayne and Webb only reflected the tradition of their native London, where they had learned that a merchant died disgraced who died without leaving substantial benefactions in his will.[35] Throughout the seventeenth century as pious and substantial men as the Rev. John Cotton, Major General Daniel Dennison and Deputy Governor Samuel Symonds, whose estates totalled

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they were conditional on the extinction of the line of the primary heir. Just after the period considered the Rev. Ezekiel Rogers did leave the bulk of his estate of £ 1,535 to the church of Rowley or to the town for the maintenance of the ministry of the church. I, 333-4.

[34] NEH&GR, V (1851), 296; VIII (1854), 356; X (1856), 179-80; Keayne, *Apologia*, 265-70. Other causes received £ 567 in cash, a £ 5 annuity and four grants of land, at least one of them substantial. In addition to the citations given see NEH&GR, IV (1850), 53, 54; V, 301, 302, 443; VIII, 281; IX (1855), 36; X, 86, 265.

[35] Keayne and Webb accounted for £ 470 of the cash bequests for other causes and the largest grant of land as well. While in England Keayne had adopted the interesting system of putting aside one penny out of every shilling he earned and assigning it to the poor. He kept it up for forty years. *Apologia*, pp. 268-269. On the munificence of the London mercantile community see Jordon, *English Philanthropy*, pp. 348-51.

£ 1,000, £ 2,000 and £ 2,500 respectively, could leave nothing at all to charity, while Governor Thomas Dudley contributed only five marks (£ 3.6s.8d) for the poor out of an estate of £ 1,500.[36] Governors Endecott and Winthrop died poor, and Governor Richard Bellingham, though he did leave a large bequest that provided the basis for a law suit lasting over a century, designated it all for the maintenance of the ministry.[37]

With secular charitable trusts relatively unimportant in New England, the center for private charity remained the church. The English "brief," a letter from the King as head of the Church of England authorizing the collection of charity in the churches of a given county for a stated cause, obviously violated Puritan sensibilities and it had no New England equivalent, although the device remained in use in England until 1828.[38] But abandoning the brief

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36. NEH&GR, V, 241; VIII, 23-24, 128v; Essex Probate Records, III, 263-71; NEH&GR, V, 296.

37. Sewall Papers, II, 9-10.

38. On the brief see Jordon, English Philanthropy, pp. 149-50, 353, 362-3; Owen, English Philanthropy, p. 84. On the list of "common grievances" presented to the

did not equal abandoning the poor, and it would be incorrect to assert that the churches ignored their duty in this area.[39] As early as 1642 a receipt of the First Church of Boston referred to a deceased member "who in the tyme of his sicness was maintained at the churches charge a longe

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Parliament of 1624 in the Winthrop Papers stands a complaint against briefs, the petitioners objecting that charitable collections should be left at the discretion of the localities -- "None so fitt to releeve the poore as the county which may easily enquire of the certeyntie of the lesse of the poverty and liyfe of the partie whither fitt to be releeved." I, 302-3.

39. Rutman argues that the Boston church increasingly abandoned its duties towards the poor to the town as the first and second decades of settlement wore on because with more restrictive admissions policies church and town ceased to be identical, and because the church turned inward, became preoccupied mainly with its members' spiritual state and saw suffering as deserved punishment for sin, to be moralized over and improved by altering the sufferer's way of life, but not to be relieved outright. The first point, at least, has some validity, but even it assumes gratuitously that primary responsibility for the poor either did or should have lain with the church rather than the town. Nor did the church abandon the poor merely because the officers theoretically charged with their supervision, the church "widows," never came into existence. The ensuing discussion should indicate that the deacons did everything the widows might have. For Rutman's views see Winthrop's Boston, pp. 217-18.

season."[40] Throughout the century the Boston churches received occasional legacies for the poor (including half of Robert Keayne's £ 120) and sometimes shared with the town the costs of keeping a poor member or administered the town's grant to him.[41] Boston, in fact, considered the deacons of the First Church sufficiently experts on poverty to appoint them to supervise the construction of its alms house in 1660.[42] All the churches of the town aided the poor of their own congregations and elsewhere by special collections, and, in addition, the First voted a regular monthly contribution for its poor in 1688.[43] Scattered evidence indicates that churches of other towns aided the poor as well,[44] but the general rule both in Boston and elsewhere remained as the First Church voted in 1691: ". . . the poor beinge poore of Towne so under their care, and only as church members to have some addition."[45]

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[40] Winthrop Papers, IV, 354.

[41] In addition to Keayne's bequest the First Church received £ 4 from Mary Ward in 1667 and £ 230 from Anne Mills in 1725, and there are probably other bequests the records for which have not survived or are not readily available. Suffolk Cty. Ct. Rec., II, 1032; Boston First Church Rec., II, 469. For instances of the churches sharing the expenses of their poor members with the town see Boston Rec., VII, 114, 147, 149.

[42] Boston Rec., VII, 7.

[43] Boston First Church Rec., I, 119. In 1650 the First Church raised a special contribution to help the suffering Congregational church of the Bermudas and in 1711

The church having refused to contest for responsibility for the poor, the trust devolved on the towns, which carried it out through a policy combining a genuinely charitable impulse with an overriding passion for keeping

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the Second Church raised £ 260 to aid victims of the great Boston fire of that year, to give only two examples. First Church Rec., I, 50-51; Carl Bridenbaugh, Cities in the Wilderness (New York: 1955), p. 235.

[44] Thomas Dudley left his five marks for the poor to the deacons of the church of Roxbury, for example, and by 1654 at the latest the deacons of the church of Dorchester had begun to disperse stock and funds for the poor and distressed of their own and other towns. For Dudley's will see the last citation in note 36 above. For the activities of the deacons of Dorchester between 1654 and 1689 see Boston Rec., IV, 112; Records of the First Church of Dorchester, in New England, 1636-1734 (Boston: 1891), pp. 8-9, 53, 56, 83, 90, 91-92, 93-94, 96, 100, and the references in the index under "church benevolences."

[45] Boston First Church Rec., I, 120.

taxes low and a peculiarly Puritan concern for order. Dorchester could raise contributions for the family of the minister of Braintree and the relief of the fleet in the Carribean in 1667 and five years later order out of town Mercy Plum, daughter of an inhabitant, despite her advanced state of pregnancy because she had married a Beverley man who had not properly provided for her. This the selectmen regarded as "contrary to good order, and to the hazarding of a charge upon the towne."[46] Just because the towns admitted they had to support their own needy inhabitants they often went to extravagant lengths to make sure they admitted no one as an inhabitant who might someday need support. Most towns had ordinances forbidding residents to entertain strangers without permission and requiring bond of prospective inhabitants or their sponsors guaranteeing that they would not cost the town anything during their residency, and the selectmen made sure to "warn out" anyone who, like Mercy Plum, was not a legal inhabitant and who seemed likely to need aid.[47]

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[46] *Boston Rec.*, IV, 141, 147, 185. They may not have been very successful in getting her to leave since the selectmen had to repeat the order twice in the next two years. *Ibid.*, 192, 199. Towns could appeal to the county courts when recalcitrants refused to obey their orders to leave. See *Essex County Court Records*, III, 62, 65, 95, 218; IV, 397; VI, 192, VII, 179, 271; VIII, 22, 45, 186, 292.

The selectmen's zeal, shared by the townspeople, all of whom had to pay taxes, sometimes resulted in unseemly jurisdictional disputes between the towns that the county courts had to settle. Newbury warned out Evan Morice in 1682 because he had become a public charge in his old age and sent him back to Topsfield, from which he had moved five years previously. Topsfield returned the compliment and warned Morice back to Newbury even though he had been one of the earliest settlers of the town and had"born lot and scot" in all town charges for over thirty years. Both towns appealed to the Essex County Court, which assigned Morice to Newbury but required Topsfield to pay one-third of his charge if it became substantial.[48]

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[47] These practices, the law governing them and instances of their enforcement are treated in detail for all the New England colonies in Josiah Henry Benton, Warning Out in New England (Boston: 1911).

Warnings out became frequent in many areas in the eighteenth century. Not only urban Boston had a large number, over five hundred warned out between 1721 and 1742, but even the towns of rural Worcester County issued thirty-four separate warrants ordering single persons, couples or even entire families to depart from their jurisdiction in the years 1733-37 alone.[49] By that period the order had lost its original purpose on account of changes in the Massachusetts residency laws. For the most part the selectmen were no longer trying to get the objectionable parties removed -- they would have had to pay for that -- but only serving formal notice that the town would not be responsible for their support if they became indigent.[50] At the end of the century the practice of some towns of officially warning out all their inhabitants so that they might have no poor rates at all brought the system into disrepute and it was abolished by statute in 1793.[51]

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[48] Essex County Ct. Rec., VIII, 291-2. For other instances in which the county courts assigned paupers to particular towns see Suffolk County Ct. Rec., I, 89, 429, 605; II, 1061; Inferiour Ct. of Pleas, pp. 148, 149, 154.

[49] Bridenbaugh, Cities in the Wilderness, p. 392; "Records of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace," Proceedings of the Worcester Society of Antiquity, pp. 82. 92, 104, 109, 122, 126, 129, 132, 138, 146, 148, 151, 154, 155, 165, 166, 175, 177, 182.

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[50] Under an act passed in 1659 any person or his family resident in a town for three months automatically became a legal inhabitant of it unless the selectman not only warned him out, but actually forced him to leave by petitioning the county court "and the same prosecuted to effect." A poor person belonging to no town under the terms of the act could be settled in any town of the county, to be maintained at the charge of the county. Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. I, 365. This act fell with the old charter, and when the legislature passed a new act in 1692 it kept the three months residence requirement but only required the town to register its warning out with the county court in order to be freed of all charges for poor relief that might arise in the future. The town, in addition, could secure a warrant from any Justice of the Peace to remove the person warned out if it wished, but in that case it would have to pay for the cost of his transportation back to his legal residence. In the cases from the Worcester County Court cited in the previous note the court only approved of the towns' warnings out; it did not take steps to see that they were effectually prosecuted. Acts and Resolves, I, 67-68.

[51] Benton, Warning Out in New England, pp. 1-3, 52, 116.

Most towns did not go to the point of giving notice of eviction to everyone in them, but they all carried out policies of saving on expenses for their poor by binding out as apprentices or servants orphans and children of unwed mothers or indigent families.[51a] Inhumane as that may seem today, the practice owed as much to a concern for morality as economy. Those children who needed poor relief also needed regulation in the eyes of the selectmen because the parents were either dead, disabled, missing or unmarried. When the selectmen made their inspections of literacy and family order the children who could not read their catechisms, who were not trained in some lawful calling and who most needed discipline not surprisingly usually turned out to be the children of the indigent. The selectmen of Watertown bound out Edward Sanderson's two children in 1671 not only because the town would find it hard to support both their parents and them, but also because even if it could, "yet it would not tend to the good of the children for their good education and bringing up soe as they may be usefull in the common weall or themselves to live comfertably and use fully in time to come [.]"[52] In their own view the Watertown selectmen had done the Sanderson children a service, just as the selectmen of Andover requested permission to place out the children of Samuel Hutchenson, standing under indictment in 1675 as an idle, improvident person, in order "to deliver them from much suffering."[53]

[51a] This practice is discussed in Lawrence Towner, "A Good Master Well Served: A Social History of Servitude in Massachusetts 1620-1750" (Ms. Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern Univ., 1955), pp. 84-104. For instances of children being placed out see (besides those in Watertown cited below) Suffolk Cty. Ct. Rec., II, 647, 915; Inferiour Court of Pleas, p. 160; Dedham Records, IV, 203; V, 8, 50; Boston Rec., IV, 150, 212.

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[52] Watertown Records, I, 105. The town's action took place in the context of regular surveys to see that children were being properly educated. In 1727 the selectmen observed once again that families "That are under very Neady and Suffering Circumstances" often had children able to work and also to go to school and attend public worship, but that "through the willfulness Negligence & Indulgence of their parents they are brought up in Idleness, Ignorance and Ereligion, and are more Likely to prove a trouble and Charge, then blessings in their Day and Generation if not timely prevented." They prevented it by breaking up a poor family the next month. Ibid., I, 114, 122, 135-6, 137; II, 340-41.

[53] Essex Cty. Ct. Rec., VI, 26, 425.

Because they regarded it not so much as a kinship unit but as the primary means for transmission of education and discipline, the Puritans broke up the families of the poor out of respect for the institution of the family itself.

IV. Urban Poverty: Boston

Boston stands as at least a partial exception to much of what has just been said about the nature of the New England poor. Its size, its urban character, its status as a resort for the poor and the displaced of the whole of New England, and the vulnerability of its working force to commercial depression gave it not only a larger problem but also one of a different sort.[54]

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[54] Boston's problems and the methods used to combat it have received ample treatment in Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, pp. 81-83, 233-35, 392-94. The General Court admitted in 1735 that the poor laws in force were "not so suitable to the circumstances of the said town, which are different from those of the other towns in the province." *Acts and Resolves*, II, 756.

Boston's position as the center of commerce and the main port of New England, as well as the intermittent Indian wars that plagued the inland between 1675 and 1763 brought streams of the indigent and the uprooted into the town to the great discomfort of the selectmen and inhabitants. In 1679 a town meeting declared, in what became a characteristic refrain, that the selectmen needed the power to reject strangers without having to appeal to the county court for a warrant because "the towne is fild with poor idle and profane persons" and refugees "that come hither for shelter and releife in time of warr" and because "the constitution of the Towne of Bostone is such in respect of the continuall resort of all sorts of persons from all partes both by sea and land, more than any other towne in the collony."[55] Not until 1735 did the town get the power it wanted, and even then it did little good.[56] The General

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[55] Boston Rec., VII, 135. Cf. ibid., II, 152; VII, 241.

[56] Acts and Resolves, II, 756-8. The town charges for the poor rose steeply all the same: even with twelve overseers of the poor the number of poor was just too large for the town to supervise them carefully.

Court also listened to the appeals enough to make occasional grants of money, generally for the relief of war refugees, but with the exception of a generous allotment of £ 1,000 during the small-pox epidemic of 1721 these never proved substantial.[57]

Boston developed all the problems of urban communities. Usually its difficulties seem small scale versions of those that beset seventeenth century London, though occasionally they have a more modern sound. In 1734 the town complained of a dwindling tax base ("And it is observable that many Inhabitants of good Circumstances are gone out from us, And many indigent Poor have fill'd the Vacancy, and encreas'd our Polls") and in 1738 it protested against the erection of Rumney Marsh into a separate jurisdiction -- one hesitates to say "suburb" -- on the grounds that the inhabitants derived their wealth from Boston and ought to pay its taxes.[58]

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[57] Boston Rec., VII, 107, 111-12; Acts and Resolves, VIII, 43, 106, 256; IX, 47, 109, 226, 298, 474; X, 123.

[58] Boston Rec., XII, 122, 207.

Whatever the analogies, the town did pay a very large amount for the relief of the poor. The town meeting of 1679 was complaining when the bill still stood at less than £ 200 a year; twenty-one years later, in 1700, it had doubled to £ 400, and another £ 500 had to be added that year for a "Stock to set the poor on work." Thereafter the annual charge rose more slowly, reaching £ 940 in 1728 and 1729, but then it suddenly jumped to £ 2,069 by 1734 and in 1737 it had doubled once more to £ 4,000.[59] The population had probably not quadrupled between 1679 and 1737;

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[59] Ibid., VII, 187; XII, 121-2, 178; Sewall Diary, II, 8. These figures differ slightly from some of those in Bridenbaugh because he used the total amounts voted to defray the costs of the poor and other necessary charges. The statistics for 1728-37 come from petitions for tax abatements, ordinarily highly unreliable documents. However, the total charges for poor and other expenses voted by the town did rise by the appropriate amounts. Moreover, a town meeting complained to the overseers of the poor about the same increase in poor rates noted in its petition of 1735, and other figures given in the petition, notably the claim to have spent £ 1,200 on the town watch, are confirmed by other entries in the town records which were not intended for outside circulation. Boston Rec., XII, 6, 86, 108, 140, 173.

the cost of poor relief had multiplied over twenty times.[60]

That kind of massive poverty and the peculiar mercantile economy of the town brought about the local reappearance of a phenomenon the colonists had thought they had left in England: the "willing poor" unable to find work. John Hull had jotted down in his diary in 1656 that "Twenty persons, or about such a number, did agree to raise a stock to procure a house and materials to improve the youth of the town of Boston (which wont employment) in several manufactures"[61] and the town meeting of December 18,

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[60] Bridenbaugh estimates Boston's population as about 4,500 in 1680, 7,000 in 1690, 6,700 in 1700, 9,000 in 1710, 12,000 in 1720, 13,000 in 1730 and 17,000 in 1740. Cities in the Wilderness, pp. 6n., 143n., 303n. Inflation places considerable difficulties in the way of accurate comparisons of the different figures for the cost of poor relief, particularly since the Boston records do not indicate which of the several currencies then in circulation were used in raising a poor rate. However, the rise in the proportion devoted to the poor out of the total tax bill does confirm that Boston spent more and more of her public resources on the relief of poverty as the years passed. In 1728 the poor cost £ 940 out of a total public expenditure on all charges of £ 4,700; in 1734 £ 2,000 out of a total of £ 6,700; and, in 1737 £ 4,000 out of £ 8,000. This is an increase from twenty percent to fifty percent. For citations see the previous note.

[61] Hull Diary, p. 178. Cf. Boston Rec., II, 129.

1682 revived the old Elizabethan division of the poor into three classes. It talked of "those that are sick, aged and incapacitated for labor," those "that mispend their time in idleness and typlinge with grate neglect of theire callings," and also of "many persons that would worke but have not where with all to imploy themselves."[62] That meeting consequently proposed a combination almshouse-workhouse to replace the simple almshouse that had burned down in the great fire that year, but the project never worked out because Suffolk County used the new building for its house of correction, which prevented "many Honest Poor Peoples going there for the designed Reliefe and Support. . . ."[63]

Though the town made other sporadic attempts "for setting the poor to work,"[64] it did not build a workhouse solely devoted to that function until 1735, when a town meeting adopted an elaborate scheme to make the poor all but self supporting in a new structure where they might both live and earn money picking oakum.[65] Workhouses had had little appeal to English philanthropists,[66] but in Boston a better combination of the virtues of frugality and industry combined with a tax savings could not have been imagined, and the Overseers of the Poor had little difficulty raising £ 3,600 by private subscription from 121 donors to pay for the project. When that amount turned out to be insufficient another £ 729 came in by way of contributions and the town raised a rate of £ 377 to complete the building.[67]

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[62] Boston Rec., VII, 157.

[63] Ibid., VIII, 93.

[64] Mather Diary, I, 422; Boston Rec., VII, 241; VIII, 23, XI, 20.

The workhouse turned out to be a financial success, but it could not have gone very far towards solving the problems of Boston's poor. In 1741 it held only fifty-five persons and only ten of them were adult males.[68] All of Boston's public relief, in fact, large as it was, could have met only a part of the burden of its indigent by the second quarter of the eighteenth century. As of 1737, the town paid £ 4,000 in poor rates, it had been forced to vote £ 859 in tax abatements to individuals on its books of polls, "most of it whole Rates of poor People not able to pay." Since at least some of these individuals had families, the abatements figure alone indicated the existence of at least several hundred poor people. Still another 270 persons, some of them also presumably heads of families, had not been rated because of their poverty, "besides many Hundreds for [the] same Reason not Entered in those Books at all."[69] Yet the almshouse in 1735, two years earlier, had only eighty-eight people in it.[70] Many individuals undoubtedly received public aid although resident in private homes and some of the people who received abatements probably could at least support themselves without direct aid, while the town may also very well have been exaggerating its plight, but even with these qualifications neither the poor rate nor the existing public institutions seems adequate to maintain all the indigent Boston must have had. Private charity would have had to relieve many of them if they were relieved at all.

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[65] Boston Rec., XII, 111, 235-40.

[66] Jordan, English Philanthropy, pp. 270-72.

[67] Boston Rec., XII, 181-3, 248.

[68] Ibid., XII, 273.

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[69] Ibid., XII, 178.

[70] Ibid., XII, 122.

A municipality that could raise £ 4,300 in voluntary contributions for a workhouse obviously did have considerable charitable resources. The churches in particular contributed heavily through both regular and special collections: in just two sabbaths during the severe winter of 1741 they managed to collect £ 1,240 between them for the relief of the poor.[71] Individual donors helped too, often handsomely. John Hull, the richest Boston man of his generation, contributed enough at various times for Samuel Willard to declare at his death in 1682 that the poor had lost "a liberal and Merciful friend,"[72] and others undoubtedly stood ready to take up where Hull left off. Madame Dorothy Saltonstall left £ 200 to be distributed among the poor in 1738, and thirteen years earlier another widow, Anne Mills, willed £ 560 to the First and Second Churches for the support of the poor of their congregations.[73]

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[71] On Boston charitable activities see Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, pp. 393-4.

[72] *The High Esteem which God hath of the Death of his Saints*, p. 16.

[73] *Boston Rec.*, XII, 217-18; *First Church of Boston Records*, II, 469. Mrs. Mills left an equal amount to the two churches of Watertown.

Best of all, Boston had Cotton Mather. The man who wrote "G.D." before each daily entry in his diary that "Good Deeds" might be repeated 365 times a year made one of his major functions in life providing for the poor, as he was careful to point out in the diary he prepared for the edification of his descendants: "No little Part of my Life is taken up in promoting Intentions of Charity."[74] Mather gave much of his own salary to the poor, he administered the gifts of others and above all by written word and oral exhortation he promoted good works in the people.

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[74] Mather Diary, I, 529. Mather wrote at one point in 1713 that "the distressed Families of the Poor to which I dispense, or procure needful Releefs, are now so many, and of such Daily Occurrence, that it is needless for me here to mention them." Ibid., II, 260. Mention them he did, however, with such regularity that a full list of the references to his charitable activities in his diary would take up the better part of a page (the index does not indicate more than a fraction of them under "poor" or related headings). Barely a month went by in the first two decades of the eighteenth century when he did not put several entries into his diary on the order of "Several very poor in the Flock, are objects for my further cares" or "Several New Objects, full of Poverty and Misery, offer themselves into my Cares." II, 525, 546. He also kept lists of the poor, both for his own benefactions and to aid others. I, 271, II, 152.

of Boston. Orthodox Puritan theory had always held that men ought to give to the poor, as well in obedience to God's explicit commands and in fulfillment of their role as His stewards as because such behavior confirmed their justification and demonstrated that they participated in the bonds of love.[75] Many divines had even admitted, somewhat inconsistently, that the doer of alms deeds might expect both temporal and spiritual blessings as his reward.[76] Mather, therefore, was being perfectly orthodox but perhaps a little insidious when he wrote that "I could mind you of poor little Tradesmen that have come to Live upnn their Rents, by the secret Blessing of God upon their callings, when they have conscientiously Laid aside a certain part of their Income, for the Lord." Conversely, he warned that those who withheld a part of their estates from pious uses stood in the greatest danger of forfeiting the whole.[77] He must have had this effect, particularly when he "insinuated" in all his visits to "Persons of Capacity" his "Exhortations to a liberal consideration of the Poor."[78]

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[75] Giving alms would not get a man into heaven but they would confirm the fact that God had predestined him to go there. Perkins, "Cases of Conscience," Works, II, 146-8. Downame, The Plea of the Poore, p. 189. For a brief summary of the reasons for almsgiving see this last work, pp. 47-50. The general Protestant theory of charity is summarized at some length in Jordan, English Philanthropy, pp. 155-215.

[76] John Downame, for example, had admitted that charity had rewards not only in the next world but in this one. God, he wrote, "payeth us with our owne money also, even with the coyne of worldly blessings which is so current among us. . . . So that if we sow the seede of our beneficence it will returne unto us a double harvest; the crop of temporall benefits in this life, and of everlasting blessedness in the life to come." The Plea of the Poore, pp. 211-213. Cf. Thomas Gouge, The Surest Way of Thriving (London: 1676), p. 10.

Using his own and others' funds Mather engaged constantly in all kinds of projects for aiding the poor: he gave to them outright, he organized charity schools, he promoted "hospitals," he even tried to get "Two poor persons, objects of my care" to marry, presumably on the theory that two could be relieved as cheaply as one.[79] In giving and in soliciting gifts Mather did good to all men, those of the household of faith and those not. Orthodox ministers and a "Froward Anabaptist Minister," the godly and the ungodly, sober men and drunkards, the diligent and the idle, Negroes and whites all benefited from his bounty,[80] though the ungodly may possibly have resented his coupling the money with books and words of admonition and his advice to other donors to do the same: "Can't you contrive, to intermix a Spiritual Charity, with your Temporal? Perhaps you may Discourse with them about the State of their Souls, and obtain from them, which you now have a Singular Advantage to do, some Declared Resolutions to Do what they ought to do."[81]

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[77] *Durable Riches*, p. 24. Men who fail to give to charity "bring a *Confiscation* upon the Rest of their Estates; they bring all under a *Forfeiture*." *Pascentius* (Boston: 1714), pp. 21-22.

[78] *Mather Diary*, I, 529.

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[79] For Mather's promotions of charity schools and "hospitals" (places of hospitality) for the poor see his Diary, I, 530; II, 179, 180. His plans to marry two poor people are in ibid., II, 445.

[80] For instances of Mather aiding individuals he considered ungodly, atheistical or wicked and also of his charity to individuals of other religious persuasions or even other races see Diary, I, 209, 580-81; II, 67, 96, 141, 151, 240, 335, 457, 556, 578, 581, 769. For a "drone" he tried to find not only relief but employment, II, 336. In 1711 he had so many poor people on his lists he was reduced to casting lots to see which ones he should relieve out of his own limited funds and in 1712 he boasted that "Not one Day has passed me, without Expending some Little Portion of my Revenues on Pious Uses." II, 67; William R. Mannierre II ed., The Diary of Cotton Mather, D.D., F.R.S. for the Year 1712 (Chalotesville: 1964), p. 124.

With Mather's frenetic energy joined to its private and public resources Boston probably merited Carl Bridenbaugh's judgment that "no town in Europe or America showed so much concern for its unfortunates as did Boston."[82] Yet the periodic unemployment of able-bodied and willing poor in the city, temporary as it must have been in an expanding economy, revealed a potentially dangerous aspect in the colonial attitude towards the poor. Though poverty in itself might either punish or perfect, when it came to dealing with sinners the Puritan God, like the Mikado, tried to let the punishment fit the crime, and for certain sins, including

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81. Bonifacius, p. 146.

82. Cities in the Wilderness, 394.

idleness and intemperance, he thought poverty an especially fitting reward.[83] When Joseph Belcher complained in the Massachusetts election sermon of 1703 that idleness and drink were "the Parent of a great deal of the Poverty and Beggery, which is to be seen upon many"[84] he may have been stating little more than empirical fact in a land of a labor shortage and a basically agricultural economy, but the temptation would remain to identify all able bodied poor as idle and vicious fellows, whatever the circumstances, as one striking instance illustrates.

A scarcity of grain in 1710 aggravated by profiteers who exported part of the little stock available produced steep bread prices in Boston and caused a near riot among its poor. Judge Samuel Sewall, whose name was a byword for conservatism, had little sympathy for either the lawless or the profiteers, but he understood the former's distress, and to his pastor, the Rev. Ebenezar Pemberton, he made the sympathetic but traditional observation that "God's people . . . though they brought themselves into straits by their own fault, yet God pitied and help'd them." Pemberton's reply left Sewall "stricken": "They were not God's people but the Devil's people that wanted Corn. There was Corn to be had; if they had not impoverish'd themselves by Rum, they might buy Corn." Sewall was the more orthodox of the two and he promptly cancelled his dinner invitation to the minister, while the selectmen of Boston, their charity sharpened by a dislike of bread riots, took care of the profiteers by maintaining public granaries and by securing a law banning the export of grain.[85] Still Pemberton was as learned and godly a minister as any New England produced and considered a doctrinal "liberal." The opportunity to think as he did could grow greater in years then far into the future when more and more of the Massachusetts economy would resemble Boston's and Boston itself had gone on to develop depths of poverty undreamed of in 1710.

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[83] "Some sins are Impoverishing. As uncleannes . . . Intemperance . . . Injustice is also Impoverishing. . . . So is Idleness . . . The like may also be said of Keeping bad company." William Burnham, Gods Providence in Placing Men in their Respective Stations & Conditions Asserted & Shewed (New London: 1722), pp. 11-12.

[84] The Singular Happiness of Such Heads or Rulers As Are Able to Choose Out their Peoples Way, and Will Also Endeavour their Peoples Comfort (Boston: 1701), p. 42.

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[85] Sewall Diary, II, 281. During a similar dearth three years later Cotton Mather busied himself soliciting gifts of bread for the poor. Mather Diary, II, 336. For the ban on exports see Boston Records, VIII, 84. Acts and Resolves, I, 724-5. The town officials laid up grain in advance and sold it in times of scarcity at reasonable rates. They also regulated the price of bread and grain itself when sold by private retailers. Boston Records, VIII, 101, 104, 220; XI, 31, 104, 109.

It is of course unfair to condemn a social theory for not taking notice of developments that occur centuries after its enunciation. The Puritans' view of poverty can be criticized in the context of its times only on the same grounds as their concept of wealth: neither gave a man much peace. Never satisfied, the believer mistrusted both poverty and riches and, indeed, all states of *being*, putting his faith only in becoming. The word "security" the Puritans used mainly in reproach. To be really happy they would have had to discover a way of earning money without ending up rich or of losing it without growing poor.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL: THE IDEAL OF DEFERENCE AND ITS DISRUPTION

I. The Habit of Respect

Reinforcing the scholastic neatness of the doctrines of calling and order, an inherited pattern of behavior far less articulated but equally compelling shaped the habits of deference that inclined the lesser ranks in New England to keep their place and allowed the upper ones to claim with confidence the privileges due their station. A frame of mind more traditionally English than specifically Puritan, it still gave solid support to Puritan social ideology, and only after the ideology itself changed would the mood associated with it also begin to dissipate.

Seventeenth century New Englanders valued their rights as highly as their eighteenth century successors, but they also firmly believed that those rights were not apportioned equally to all men. When they drafted the Body of Liberties in 1641 to give explicit, written protection to the just claims of the various parts of society they made sure to include an article guaranteeing the privileges of the "true gentleman" by exempting him from corporal punishment "unless his crime be very shamefull, and his course of life vitious and profligate."[1]

The second part of the article in effect defined the upper classes at the same time as it conceded their special status. True gentlemen were those whose lives by definition were never vicious, profligate or shameful, men who fulfilled a standard of moral conduct considered the distinguishing attribute of a particular social station and whose descendants were presumed to inherit the virtues of their ancestors. Sir Thomas Smith defined the class in Tudor times as

> those whom their blood and race doth make noble and knowne, . . . for that the auncestor hath bin notable in riches or vertues, or (in fewer wordes) old riches or prowes remaining in one stock which if the successor do keepe and follow, they be vere nobiles . . . if they doe not, yet the fame and

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[1] William H. Whitmore ed., A Bibliographical Sketch of the Laws of the Massachusetts Colony from 1630 to 1686 (Boston: 1890), p. 43. The code of laws of 1648 changed "gentleman" to "any man" and added "except he have not otherwise to answer the law." Lawes and Liberties, p. 50. Cf. Jules Zanger, "Crime and Punishment in Early Massachusetts," The William and Mary Quarterly, XXII (July, 1965), 471-77.

> wealth of their auncestors serve to cover them so long as it can, as a thing once gilted though it be copper within, till the gilt be worne away.[2]

By Smith's time and probably long before it, men did not have to be born into the class. ". . . As for gentlemen, they be made good cheape in England," he wrote in a justly celebrated passage and then immediately gave his complete approval to the process. Men elevated to the rank would feel obliged to display its virtues and assume its responsibilities. "As for their outward shew, a gentleman (if he will be so accompted) must go like a gentleman, a yeoman like a yeoman, and a rascall like a rascall."[3] Over a century later Cotton Mather, certainly a gentleman, gave

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[2] De Republica Anglorum, p. 38. In only one instance did the Massachusetts authorities ever resort to the device of formally degrading a man from the rank of gentleman for a particularly base crime. On September 27, 1631 the Assistants Court ordered that "Josias Plastow shall (for stealeing 4 basketts of corne from the Indians) returne them 8 basketts againe be fined £ 5, and hereafter to be called by the name of Josias and not Mr. as formerly hee used to be. . . ." Mass. Rec., I, 92; Winthrop Jl., I, 74.

[3] De Republica Anglorum, p. 41.

Smith's logic a characteristically religious twist by justifying his wearing of a signet ring from the University of Edinburgh "not from any vanity of ornament, but out of obedience to the Fifth Commandment, which directs us to assert the Honour of any Dignity, wherein the Providence of God may station us."[4]

Mather asked for the hmnor due his station more reluctantly than his inferiors gave it. Though gentlemen were made good cheap in New England too, the concept carried weight not only with those who aspired to that particular rank, but with all those who respected rank at all. In 1707 Ebenezar Pemberton made the mistake of calling a meeting of the Old South Church by inviting the "Gentlemen of the church and congregation," whereupon several members stayed away, affirming "they were not Gentlemen and therefore they were not warned to come."[5] If anything the gentlemen themselves treated the idea of rank more casually than others, the respect their inferiors displayed sometimes, as in

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[4] Mather Diary, II, 63.

[5] Sewall Diary, II, 195-6.

Pemberton's case, causing them no little embarrassment. Cotton Mather actually feared that some of his more remote relatives were reluctant to claim their kinship to him because they believed his "Superior" circumstances would "dishonour" them. He sent them each a book of piety and a letter explaining "that they should consider me, as under the obligations of a kinsman to them."[6]

High rank in anyone, even troublers of Israel, never went unnoticed. On submitting his remonstrance in favor of toleration and Presbyterianism in 1646, Dr. Robert Child found himself hauled before the Massachusetts court of assistants for contempt of authority, but when he "fell into a great passion" the court rebuked him for conduct unbecoming his station: "they considered he was a person of quality, and therefore he should be used with such respect as was meet to be showed to a gentleman and a scholar, but if he would behave himself no better, he should be committed to the common prison and clapped in irons."[7]

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[6] The Diary of Cotton Mather, D.D., F.R.S. for the Year 1712, pp. 102-3.

[7] Winthrop Jl., II, 358.

Child at least had a legitimate claim to be a person of quality, but even so fantastic and shady a character as "Sir" Christopher Gardiner found some protection in his specious title. The Massachusetts court of assistants ordered his arrest for criminal dealings with Morton of Merrymount and for acting as a spy for Sir Ferdinando Gorges, yet on hearing of his apprehension in Plymouth Colony in 1631 Governor John Winthrop thought it wise to assure Governor William Bradford in the request for Gardiner's return that "I never intended any hard measure to him, but to respecte and use him according to his qualities."[8]

The same mentality could not see a list of names or a group of people without arranging them in an order of precedence. The congregations attending public worship every Sunday in New England's churches had to take seats rated according to dignity and assigned by formulas based on arcane combinations of age, wealth and social standing. Watertown gave as its rules for seating in 1656: "1. office 2. age 3. [e]state 4. gifts." Almost a hundred years later, in 1740, it instructed its seating committee to "have regarde to Age, Honor and Usefullness. Also to go According to Real & Personal Estate as it Stands in the [Tax] Invoice. . . ."[9] Churches in other towns had different formulas, but everywhere because of the ambiguity of the criteria, this attempt to have men worship their God in orderly formation produced endless disputes, bad feeling and even outright violence. Congregations split into warring factions over the measurement of personal dignity, town meetings repeatedly rejected the reports of their seating committees, the committees themselves refused to serve, and minor riots even took place in some meeting houses when individuals who felt that their assignment slighted their actual social standing attempted to scramble into seats of higher dignity.[10] Some of the congregation of Boston's

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[8] William Bradford, History of Plymouth Plantation, II, 139-140, 140n.; Winthrop Jl., I, 68.

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[9] Watertown Records, I, 37, 59, 81; III, 211, 266. The relative dignity of seats was often a matter of arbitrary assignment, rather than the result of desirable location. In 1732, for example, a Watertown town meeting voted "that the Third Seat Below in the Body of Seats and the Fore Seat in the Front Gallery should be Equill in Dignity. . . ." Ibid., IV, 75.

[10] For other seating plans and the altercations they produced see Ola Winslow, Meetinghouse Hill (New York:

Second Church, if Cotton Mather gave a reliable account of its doings, "not having seats to their Minds," sought better ones at the Baptist meeting in 1711, while others seceded to form the New North Church.[11] If all the confusion and the tumult over seats meant anything, it meant that however much New Englanders might quarrel over their respective places in the social hierarchy, they took the existence of the hierarchy itself seriously.

Students at Harvard and Yale had to face the same kind of ranking without the opportunity to complain -- except through their parents. Both colleges established an order of precedence for their scholars in the triennial catalogues of graduates and for academic functions that was based on principles so obscure that considerable detailed investigation during this century has failed to determine it precisely. Apparently, in the seventeenth century Harvard

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1952), pp. 142-9; Dedham Town Records, V, 20, 21; Sylvester Judd, History of Hadley (Springfield: 1905), p. 312; Town Records of Topsfield, Massachusetts (Topsfield: 1917-20), I, 349; II, 200; Samuel Sewall, The History of Woburn (Boston: 1868), pp. 184-186.

[11] Mather Diary, II, 53, 194, 353, 360; The Diary of Cotton Mather, D.D., F.R.S. for the Year 1712, p. 9.

ranked the members of its classes roughly according to actual academic performance and future intellectual promise. By the 1690's, however, classes had become so large that the college gradually began to change to a system of placing based mainly on the social positions of the students' fathers, and Yale followed suit after its founding in 1701, although both Harvard and Yale made exceptions for boys of humble worth who showed great potential for public service.[12]

Yet even in the seventeenth century ranking according to intellectual promise corresponded closely enough to ranking according to social class to fool some modern historians and to indicate the New Englanders' assumption that talent generally ran along blood lines, that by and large the intellectual and political leaders of the future generation would be the sons of the intellectual and political leaders of the present one, but that some provision should be made to admit into the upper ranks men of obscure origins who displayed outstanding gifts. Yale and Harvard abolished their old systems of placing and instituted straight alphabetical orders in 1767 and 1769 respectively, dates not without significance. The administrations of the two schools acted only because the system of assigning places to students and then answering their parents' complaints had become a nuisance, but even that indicated an important shift in values. An older generation would have held the inconveniences of the placing system less important than the need to pay due respect to superiority, as the Rev. John Cotton, who had graduated from Harvard in 1730, reminded Naphtali Dagget, acting president of Yale:

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[12] On placing in the seventeenth century see Samuel Eliot Morison, "Precedence at Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, New Series, XLII (Oct., 1932), 371-431. For eighteenth century Harvard see Clifford K. Shipton, "Ye Mystery of Ye Ages Solved," Harvard Alumni Bulletin, LVII (Dec., 1954), 258-63. The older, erroneous view that placing went according to strict notions of social class in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was advanced by Franklin B. Dexter in "On Some Social Distinctions at Harvard and Yale before the Revolution," Proc. of the A.A.S., New Series, IX (Oct., 1893), 34-59. The system of ranking, whatever it was based on, was a New England innovation.. Oxford and Cambridge ranked their students according to their dates of admission.

> I'm perswaded it will give great Dissatisfaction if the new Method takes place; It may perhaps

> save the Governours of the College some Trouble, and prevent some Reflections from some few particular Gentlemen, who think their Sons have not their due Place; But the other way will disgust Gentlemen in general, whose sons must perhaps Stand the lowest, and have one brot up by charity or of the meanest Parentage often at their Head. [13]

New Englanders not attending college or church still did not spend their days free of other signs of deference: the various degrees of honor showed up in the titles attached to male names, both in written and spoken form. Aside from militia rank, the honorifcs ranged in descending order from the prestigious "esquire," originally reserved for armigerous gentlemen and magistrates but later adopted by justices of the peace, down through "gent." and "Mr." to "goodman" and finally to no title of respect at all. People acquired these titles relatively easily and did not use them consistently -- a man might be "esquire" on one list and "Mr." on another -- but lack of rigor in their employment did not represent opposition to the social system that produced them.[14] The England the colonists left had hardly used titles (other than those of nobility) any more carefully, and Sir Thomas Smith had written of the word "gentleman":

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[13] Quoted in Shipton, "Ye Mystern of Ye Ages Solved," p. 258. Morison attributed the end of the old method of placing at Harvard and Yale to the growing size of the classes during the period, which, made ranking their members impractical. Yet while classes at Harvard were somewhat larger in the late 1760's than in the decades immediately preceding, they were not much bigger than those of the 1720's when placing had still flourished. The Harvard administration balked at ranking the class of 1773, thirty-six strong, though it had managed to place the unusually large class of 1771, which had sixty-three students. The classes of 1767-77 had 39, 34, 63, 48, 36, 48, 40, 43, and 42 students respectively; those of 1721-28, 37, 31, 43, 40, 45, 31, 37 and 47 respectively. At Yale the classes during and just after the years when placing became impractical were actually somewhat smaller than in the period just before. For the classes of 1767-1776 the figures were 24, 29, 26, 19, 19, 23, 36, 30, 35 and 33 students respectively; for the classes of 1757-66, 40, 43, 49, 33, 24, 43, 42, 28, 47 and 47 respectively. Samuel Eliot Morison, Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1942), pp. 104-105; Harvard University Quinquennial Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates (Cambridge, Mass.: 1930), pp. 176-179, 193-197; Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates of Yale University (New Haven: 1924), pp. 123-130.

> . . . whosoever studieth in the universities, who professeth liberall sciences, and to be shorte,

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[14] On the origin of New England titles and their promiscuous use see Norman H. Dawes, "Titles as Symbols of Prestige in Seventeenth-Century New England," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, VI (Jan., 1949), 69-83. My text should indicate why I do not accept Dawes' thesis that carelessness in using titles demonstrates the degeneration in the New World of the ways of displaying respect inherited from the old.

> who can live idly and without manuall labour, and will beare the port, charge and countenance of a gentleman, he shall be called master, for that is the title which men give to esquires and other gentlemen, and shall be taken for a gentleman. [15]

A New England freeholder of middling size might quarrel with his neighbor over a seat in the meeting house and his town [redacted] might give him a "goodman" on one tax list and no distinction at all on another, yet freeholder, neighbor and clerk all knew where they stood in relation to a Winthrop or a Dudley or a Bradstreet and paid their respects accordingly.

No one in New England held, however, that men had to remain permanently in the same social station in which they had been born if they had the ability to get beyond it. William Hubbard, of no illustrious parentage himself, wrote in 1686 of political mobility: "Authority that is acquired by desert, or real worth, is much better than that which is obtained by dignity of place or birth: Lewd persons may reproach the stock they issue from and gain [their] Families no honour thereby. . . ."[16] Hubbard only legitimated actual fact: New Englanders did change their places in the social scale, both for better and worse, even in the uppermost strata of society. Of the twenty-eight men serving on the Massachusetts Royal Council in 1730, for example, only eight bore names that recalled the Plymouth and Massachusetts magistracy of the seventeenth century.[17]

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[15] De Republica Anglorum, pp. 39-40. Wilbur K. Jordon notes considerable imprecision in the use of the terms "yeoman" and "gentleman" in England itself during the Tudor-Stuart period. Philanthropy in England 1480-1660, p. 324.

A good marriage, an acquired fortune, or a Harvard degree all changed a man's status for the better and improved

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16. *The Benefits of a Well-Ordered Conversation,* p. 116.

17. Whitmore, *The Massachusetts Civil List*, p. 54. The eight were Isaac Winslow, Thomas Hutchinson, Samuel Browne, Spencer Phips, William Dudley, Peter Thatcher, Benjamin Lynde, and John Wheelright. The ancestors of the last three of these men had joined the council only in the last decade of the seventeenth century after the body had been expanded by the new charter of 1692, while Spencer Phips was not actually a descendant of royal governor Sir William Phips. Born Spencer Bennett, his mother was the sister of Phips' wife, and when the governor died without issue Spencer inherited his fortune and changed his name in gratitude. *Sibley's Harvard Graduates,* V, 224-5. The William Clarke who served on the council in 1730 does not seem to have been related to the s[illegible]nteenth century magistrate Thomas Clarke.

the standing of his relations as well. Starting as a respectable artisan, John Hull acquired a fortune as a seventeenth century Boston merchant that helped gain him the post of magistrate and the social position that went with it. Hull's son-in-law, Samuel Sewall, inherited not only much of his father-in-law's business, but his social standing as well, which coupled with his own status as a Harvard graduate of good but not exalted rank aided him in qualifying for the elevated office of chief justice of the province of Massachusetts Bay. Equally impressive, William Phips, thanks to a good marriage and a spectacular find of sunken treasure, ended a career begun as a ship's carpenter as the holder of a knighthood and royal governor of Massachusetts, and others did almost as well.[18]

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[18] For Hull see Samuel Eliot Morison, Builders of the Bay Colony (Boston: 1930), 135-182, for Sewall and Phips The Dictionary of American Biography (New York: 1928-1936). The Belchers and the Cookes had equally interesting histories. Andrew Belcher, the son of a London clothworker, arrived in New England sometime before 1654 and kept a tavern at Cambridge. He married a sister of Deputy Governor Thomas Danforth, and their son, also named Andrew, after marrying well himself, made a considerable fortune as a merchant and became a member of the Massachusetts Council in 1702. His son in turn, Jonathan, received the finishing touch in social distinction, a Harvard degree in 1699, and

The wrong marriage could have the opposite effect. The Rev. Michael Wigglesworth at the venerable age of sixty-one made the mistake of marrying his twenty-year-old serving maid, thereby temporarily casting himself into disgrace. "It useth to be said nube pari [marry equally]," Increase Mather rebuked him, "but to marry with one so much your Inferior on all accounts is not nubere pari."[19]

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after doing well as a merchant and marrying the daughter of the Lieutenant Governor of New Hampshire became royal governor of Massachusetts. Belcher's great opponent, Elisha Cooke, Jr., had a similar background. Elisha Cooke, Sr. was the son of Richard Cooke, a tailor who came over around 1634 and amassed a fair sized estate. Elisha the elder consequently graduated from Harvard in 1657, became a physician and had the good fortune to marry a daughter of Governor John Leverett in 1668. Entering politics, he became the leader of the "popular party" opposed to royal influence under both the old and new charters and also accumulated a large fortune for himself, in part because of his political connections. He passed on his political leadership, his profession and his status to his son Elisha, Jr., "the great Darling of his Country," who used his influence to make an even larger fortune and who lived to plague three royal governors including Jonathan Belcher. See the D.A.B. under Jonathan Belcher and both Cookes; Sibley's Harvard Graduates, I, 520-25; IV, 349-356, 434-449.

19. Mather Papers, 4 Coll. MHS, VII, 94-95.

Education was a safer means of social advancement, a college degree not only adding to the lustre of its holder, but also regularizing the status of the later descendants of families like the Cookes and Belchers that had joined the higher ranks of society through marriage or newly-made wealth. ". . . besides a supply of ministers for our churches from this happy seminary," Cotton Mather wrote of Harvard, "we have hence had a supply of magistrates, as well as physicians, and other gentlemen to serve the commonwealth with their capacities."[20] None of these positions lacked prestige; some offered power as well, and by the latter half of the seventeenth century Harvard was recruiting a third or more of its undergraduates from outside the upper classes of society.[21] Fees were not onerous, public grammar schools could supply the training necessary for entrance, and some poor boys could even get financial help from generous benefactors if they had demonstrated an outstanding talent for Greek and Latin.[22] John Wise, who graduated from Harvard in 1673, was the first son of an indentured servant to enter the college, but for him his degree meant an opportunity to attain the social prestige of the ministry and to play an active part in colonial affairs as a leader of the Ipswich opposition to the Dominion of New England, as chaplain to the expedition against Quebec, and as an advocate of congregational autonomy and paper money.

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[20] Magnalia, II, 27. Cf. Benjamin Colman, The Master Taken up from the Sons of the Prophets (Boston: 1724), pp. 8-9; Samuel Eliot Morison, The Founding of Harvard College, p. 250. John Hancock (grandfather of the Revolutionary leader) declared in the Massachusetts election sermon of 1722: "A Liberal Education is much for the service and Glory of the Country; and the government should take the greatest care for its Encouragement; that so the schools may supply the University, the University the Churches, the Seats of Judicature, and the Council-board." Rulers Should be Benefactors (Boston: 1722), p. 23.

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[21] On the social status of the fathers of Harvard students in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries see Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge, Mass.: 1936), I, 74-75; II, 451; Robert Middlekauf, Ancients and Axioms (New Haven: 1963), p. 181.

[22] The costs of a Harvard education are calculated by Morison in Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century, I, 106-07. For the public grammar schools see Middlekauf, Ancients and Axioms, pp. 24-27, and for instances of Cotton Mather and others helping to pay for the education of poor students see Mather Diary, II, 225, 518, 529, 632; Mather Papers, pp. 626-27; Sibley's Harvard Graduates, VI, 197.

Mobility should not be confused with equality, however. The Puritan zeal for schools for all classes of society never developed into a program for democracy based on universal education. While New Englanders probably would not have understood the complaint of some eighteenth century Englishmen that free schools educated poor children beyond their station,[23] they did expect their school system to propagate existing social values. Preaching in 1705, Ebenezar Pemberton reminded his hearers that Massachusetts needed public schools to provide a classical liberal education for such "as may be fit to discharge the more noble functions in state and church," and also "a sufficient number of *lesser schools* to instruct the youth in reading, writing, and in forming their minds to modesty and virtue, to obedience and just deference to superiors, according to the rules of religion and civility."[24]

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[23] Lord Kames, for example, described the eighteenth century charity schools of England as "more hurtful than beneficial: young persons who continue there so long as to read and write fluently become too delicate for hard labour and too proud for ordinary labour." David Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660-1960,* p. 27.

[24] *Ill-boding Symptoms on a Ppofessing People* in *Sermons and Discourses on Various Occasions,* pp. 92-93.

Pemberton evidenced a mentality that approved of individuals advancing from one particular class to another at the same time that it insisted on the necessity of class in general and of class distinctions. The sober religious man whose gifts, industry or frugal mode of life brought him prosperity as a reward from a just providence deserved all the honor due whatever station he had risen to, but no figure called for more contempt or denunciation than the social climber, the man who attempted a false mobility by aping the prerogatives and outward grandeur of a class higher than the one in which his God-given gifts had placed him. Though actual enforcement of the sumptuary laws of the seventeenth century was sporadic at best, their passage in itself revealed the depth of New England feeling on that point.[25] No law prevented anyone from earning £ 200 or acquiring civil office or a liberal education,[26] but until he had one of these qualifications, the law would prevent him from wearing the finery and ornament that distinguished those who had attained the rank that went with wealth, power and learning.

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[25] In Essex County in the one year period September, 1652-September, 1653, thirty people were presented for violating the sumptuary laws and at least thirteen convicted, but in the next twenty-two years there were only five presentments. Under the pressure of King Phillips War the grand jury presented thirteen more people in 1675-76 and at least eleven were convicted, but then all enforcement ceased except for ten presentments in 1682, none of which apparently resulted in convictions. In Suffolk County only

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three individuals were ever presented in the years between 1670 and 1692, all three in 1676, and only two were convicted. Essex County Ct. Rec., I, 257, 266, 270, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 278, 285, 303, 304, 306; II, 153; III, 66, 70, VI, 27, 72-73, 134, 135; VIII, 291; Suffolk Cty. Ct. Rec., II, 698.

[26] Seventeenth century Massachusetts did sometimes display considerable resentment against laborers and artisans who took advantage of the general labor shortage to make large profits, and the General Court made some attempt to regulate wages. Aside from the urgent economic necessity for it in the first few years of the colony's existence, however, this legislation resulted from a moral indignation directed not against laboring men prospering *per se*, but at their prospering at the expense of the general welfare or of certain public-spirited individuals. Edward Johnson complained, for example, that "by excessive prizes took for their worke," artisans and laborers made many of the leaders of first generation "fall back to the next Ranke, advancing themselves in the meanetime," while John Winthrop favored wage controls because the workmen instead of using their high wages to grow rich, used them only to indulge in idleness and debilitating luxuries like tobacco and liquor. Edward Johnson, The Wonder-Working Providence of Sions Savious in New England (ed. J. Franklin Jameson; New York, 1910), p. 83; Winthrop Jl., I, 138-9.

This legislation was short lived, but the outlook that inspired it lasted far longer, binding men through opinion and belief where it failed to hold them by law. Despite extensive male suffrage and a relatively equal distribution of wealth in the form of independent freeholds, despite town meetings and public education, New Englanders continued unequal because they willingly considered themselves so. Not until the superiors discovered the theory of equality in the mid-eighteenth century and then learned its meaning under the pressure of revolution did the doctrines that supported the old social system change, and not until those same superiors had preached their new notions to their erstwhile inferiors at length and in detail in a time of war and state making did the mood that gave life to the older doctrine dissipate, and inferior and superior cease to be meaningful categories.[26a]

[26a] I seem to be taking sides in the controversy over the "Brown Thesis," the contention of Robert Brown advanced in The Revolution and Middle-Class Democracy in Massachusetts and in other works that the colonies already had a democratic political and social structure before the Revolution, and that that conflict served simply to defend existing democratic institutions against imperial encroachments. Most of Brown's critics have attacked his

Until that time all opposition to Puritan social values would never be more than nihilistic and self defeating. In seventeenth century England during the Civil War one branch of Puritanism had eventuated in Levellerism, an explicit and reasonably consistent ideology of human

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thesis by applying standards of "democracy" to Massachusetts so transcendent and so idealized that no state that has ever existed could meet them, and Brown has been quite correct in pointing out that by his opponents' definitions the present government of the United States is certainly not democratic. Yet to call Massachusetts a "democracy" and then identify it with the current political and social systems of this country, idealized or actual, would mean indulging in the same ahistorical argument Brown's critics are guilty of. The Revolution may not have changed Massachusetts institutions very much, but it did bring about major alterations in the attitudes and opinions which governed the use of these institutions, and it is precisely the colonial attitudes and opinions on politics and society that Brown ignores, contenting himself with the remark that any system in which most adult males could vote and which provided them with the form of government they wanted is democratic. That it may be, depending on definitions, yet historians must not stop at this point and ignore the very real changes in action as well as thought the Revolution and the decades following it did produce. For more sophisticated critiques of the Brown thesis argued along these lines see Bernard Bailyn, "Political Experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America," American Historical Review, LXVII (Jan., 1962), 339-351; J.R. Pole, "Historians and the Problem of Early American Democracy," AHR, LXVII (April, 1962), 626-646.

equality.[27] New England had seen no such development; subordination and order remained its standards, official and unofficial, among all classes. New England ministers never tired of attacking the "Levelling Spirit," but they meant not a coherent social philosophy but the sporadic, directionless and doomed spirit of revolt that prompted some men more desperate than most to defy values they themselves really felt to be true.[28] The levelers of New England were not Lieutenant-Colonel John Lilburne and Colonel Thomas Rainborough, but the servant who told his master he was as good a man as he and then bashed in his head and Peter Bussaker who hoped to meet some of the members of the church in hell and did not question but that he should. That servant died on the gallows and Bussaker was more drunkard than democrat.

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[27] On this subject and the potentials of Puritanism for liberty and equality the classic brief exposition remains A.S.P. Woodhouse, Puritanism and Liberty (n.p.: 1951), pp. (35)-(100).

[28] By "levelling" Cotton Mather meant only disrespectful: "It will be no good Aspect upon us, if it should be so, that a levelling spirit get so much Head among us, that no Man shall be in any thing Superiour to his Neighbours, but his very Superiority shall make him obnoxious to Envious Indignities, Obnoxious to all possible [redacted] and Defamations. How contrary this, to the Spirit of Christianity, that says, In Honour Prefer one another!" Concio ad Populum, p. 18.

II. The Effect of Revolution

In the eighteenth century the spread of English and Continental political theory to the New World and the expansion of rationalistic trends already present in Puritan thought led some perfectly respectable New England thinkers to wonder just how unequal men really were. They had no real trouble accepting the Whig ideology of men like Locke and Sydney and later of the group Caroline Robbins has named the "Eighteenth Century Commonwealth Men" because, coming out of the same Puritan political tradition the first colonists had brought over with them in 1630, the English theories fitted easily into political concepts considered commonplaces in New England. Puritan political ideology in England had expanded and fragmented under the stress of the Civil War, while in New England it had remained intact, but the New Englanders could still recognize their own. In the hands of English writers like Joseph Priestly, Richard Price and Richard Baron the commonwealth tradition was even identified with New England's own peculiar religious persuasion, with the vital difference that what England called "dissent" the colonies on the other side of the ocean accepted as orthodoxy.[29]

Sometimes abrupt shifts even appeared in the thought of one man. When the Rev. John Bulkley of Colchester delivered the Connecticut Election Sermon in 1713 he still repeated the standard line that in the state of innocency man, gifted with reason, would have acknowledged government and superiority if there had never been a fall:

> Doubtless there would have been Order and Subordination among men, (children being no sooner Born than they are actually under the Authority of their Parents) so the respective Duty's of

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[29] On the English background of American political theory see Bernard Bailyn ed., Pamphlets of the American Revolution (Cambridge, Mass.: 1965), I, 20-37; Caroline Robbins, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman (Cambridge, Mass.: 1959). The best study of the spread of Lockean and other English doctrines among the New England clergy is still Alice M. Baldwin, The New England Clergy and the American Revolution (reprinted New York: 1958), Chapters I-VI.

> Superiors & Inferiors arising from that subordination would have been grateful & pleasant: the fuits of choice and inclination. . . They would have been under the Governing influence of those good Principles which would have disposed every one to a due observance of his Province, and a chearful & regular discharge of the Duty's belonging thereto. In a word: Superiors, Inferiors and Equals had walk'd in sweet Agreement together, and Order and Tranquility had covered the Earth.[30]

By 1724 Bulkley had changed his mind, declaring all men equal in a state of nature: "I take it for granted, and think it needs no proof, that as men are, and ever were, born free, equal and independant, as to civil subjection or subordination, so there was a time when the state of nature obtained in the world."[31] Inequality had "doubtless" been man's natural state in 1713, the natural equality of men could be taken for granted in 1724. Somewhere in those eleven years Bulkley had read Locke, whom he twice referred to in 1724 as "that great man."[32]

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[30] The Necessity of Religion (New London: 1713), p. 39. Cf. supra, Chapter I, p. 9.

[31] "An Inquiry into the Right of the Aboriginal Natives to the Lands in America, and the Titles Derived From Them," 1 Coll. MHS, IV, 161.

Locke wrote of man in a state of nature, but he was talking about the nature of man. In New England it was becoming possible to identify natural man with unfallen man because of an increasingly high estimation of human reason and a corresponding decrease in the sense of the extent to which sin had corrupted it. John Wise, who was influenced by Puffendorf not Locke, began his discussion of government in 1717 by blithely announcing that "in this discourse I shall waive the consideration of Man's Moral Turpitude." Traditional political theory admitted government to be the result of voluntary covenants, but also held it to be inevitable, the irresistible effect of a grace-induced desire in regenerate man to obey the divine injunction to found government. That conception of the origin of the state Wise expressly denied, claiming government was "the Effect of Humane Free-Compacts and not of Divine Institution; it is the Produce of Man's Reason, of Humane and Rational Combinations, and not from any direct order of Infinite Wisdom, in any positive Law wherein is drawn up this or that scheme of Civil Government." So much for the fifth commandment naturally engraven on the hearts of Adam and his descendants.[33]

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[32] The changing political theories of the Bulkeley family would make an interesting study in itself. To omit the most brilliant of all, Gershom, for the sake of contrast, John's grandfather, the Rev. Peter Bulkeley of Concord, complained to John Cotton in 1650 of "all this insolency which discovers itself in the speech of men," the result he thought of "putting too much liberty and power in the hands of the multitude, which they are too weak to manage, many growing conceited, proud, arrogant, self-sufficient, as wanting nothing." John's grandson, also named Peter, as the representative of Colchester in the Connecticut House of Representatives in 1787 introduced a bill which its advocates proudly announced would help provide for a relatively equal distribution of property, the essential of republican government. Lemuel Shattuck, A History of the Town of Concord (Boston: 1835), p. 154; Connecticut Courant, 11 June 1787.

Prior to the Revolution the major effect of this change had been to pull the ideological fangs of the Puritan state. As the sense of sin receded and the value placed on man's natural abilities grew apace it became possible to argue that government existed not so much to enforce a positive pattern of virtue as to protect men's natural rights to liberty and property. The Rev. Elisha Williams, rector of Yale from 1721 to 1739, was as orthodox as any man in Connecticut and no "leveller," but he saw nothing odd in attacking a Connecticut law of 1741 excepting "New Lights" (supporters of the Great Awakening) from religious toleration. Williams argued that men did not enter society in order to be persecuted, but to preserve their liberties more effectively than they could singly in a state of Nature. Each man gave up to society only that portion of his individual natural liberty which might interfere with the social protection of all men's liberties and still retained all the other rights he possessed in a state of nature, be it to read Milton or to worship as he pleased. John Winthrop's doctrine that civil liberty consisted only in the liberty to do the good, the just and the honest and no other, Williams had evidently not heard of.[34]

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[33] Vindication of the Government of New-England Churches, pp. 33, 38. Elisha Williams, sometime rector of Yale, seconded Wise's claim that government was the result of an act dictated by man's reason. Why would men form governments and give up part of their natural liberty in the first place, he argued, if not because they saw some advantage to it. "It is nothing but their own Good can be any rational Inducement to it; and to suppose they either should or would do it on any other, is to suppose rational creatures ought to change their state with a Design to make it worse." The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants (Boston: 1744), pp. 4-5.

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[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 1-8.

Since the Connecticut legislature had given Williams the opportunity to denounce religious persecution by passing a law that did just that, everyone in the colony could not have held his opinions. Yet he was no political eccentric like his English contemporaries Hollis and Trenchard. Member of a powerful and influential family, he had not only been rector of Yale, but at the time he wrote The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants he was also Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives and a few years later he would command Connecticut's forces in King George's War. Nor was he alone in his views: popular speculation had also attributed his pamphlet, published anonymously, to his Harvard classmate Thomas Cushing, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, who shared his opinion of the Connecticut law.[35]

The new ideology of equality did not go much beyond providing a theoretical foundation for the rights of conscience that political necessities and religious diversity had forced on the colonies anyway. The natural equality John Bulkley had discovered did a New Englander very little good in 1724 because he had given it up long before when he became a member of society, and once a member he had to submit to the same old rules of subordination as ever. Only John Wise argued that even when men combined in civil society, they should still retain as much of their natural equality as possible,[36] a theory in which not even the most advanced of other thinkers would join him. Perhaps the idea of natural equality gained acceptance so readily for that very reason: it changed the premise without altering the conclusion. Only half a century later, however, in 1776, Massachusetts and Connecticut like eleven other American societies would find themselves reduced to a state of nature once again, and then the new governments they formed would result not from the voluntary submission of inferiors to their natural superiors, but from a contract among equals.

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[35] For Williams and Cushing see Sibley's Harvard Graduates, V, 568-574, 588-597.

Men do not ordinarily undertake the overhaul of society simply to be intellectually consistent, it is true, but once revolution has destroyed the theoretical and legal bases of existing institutions and the problem of re-establishing political and social order is thrust upon them all unwillingly, they are apt in their confusion to fall back on ideas they consider sacred and undeniable, however academic. Rhode Island and Connecticut simply re-adopted their royal charters with suitable modifications as the basis of their independent existence; Massachusetts, however, found it necessary to establish a government in the manner everyone agreed on as proper and self-evident. The people of Pittsfield, objecting in 1776 to the state continuing without a popularly approved constitution, informed the General Court that they had been reading the "Political Disquisitions" of James Burgh:

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[36] Vindication, pp. 49-50.

> We have heard much of Governments being founded in Compact. What Compact has been formed as the foundation of Government in this province? - We beg leave further to represent that we have undergone many grievous oppressions in this County and that now we wish a Barrier might be set up against such oppressions, against which we can have no security long till the foundation of Government be well established.-- [37]

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[37] Petition of Pittsfield, May, 1776, in Robert J. Taylor ed., Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth,

Massachusetts found itself in 1776 in the same predicament as in 1630, putting into practice ideas widely accepted as true though actually untried. In the process those ideas took on new significances they had not had while they remained polite theory rather than the basis for actual state making. Providing an intellectual justification for revolution powerfully aided the concept of equality in particular. The doctrine of social compact by itself hardly made for democracy: as long as the elected rulers carried out the purposes for which the people had instituted government the latter had to submit humbly to their rule. Only when government went beyond its duly constituted bounds and governors used their offices to subvert the ends for which they had received their power could the people rise up and revolt. Yet this implied that the people could judge when the bounds had been exceeded and that they knew what the true ends of government were, and this implication in turn led the apologists of a real revolution, not just a paper one, to revise their opinions of the capacities of individual

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Documents on the Formation of Its Constitution, 1775-80 (Chapel Hill: 1961), p. 28.

men to govern themselves. Ultimately, they had to make the same discovery Christopher Goodman had two centuries before in inciting the overthrow of the monarchy of the Catholic Mary Tudor: though God had vested the power to rule in magistrates, in the last analysis every man was a magistrate.[38]

Andrew Eliot gave the Massachusetts election sermon on May 29, 1765, when news of the passage of the Stamp Act had undoubtedly reached the colony, and he suspected some sort of resistance was in order. Admitting that "every man is not fit to govern; there must be a genius for government, and there must be constant study and application," Eliot also felt compelled to justify the right of revolution and to assert that good rulers had nothing to fear from it because human nature was not so perverse that the people would overthrow a good government. "People are generally capable of knowing when they are well used. Public happiness is easily felt. . . ." He conceded that the people might find fault with the best of governments, but "they soon recover their temper, they forget the faults of their rulers, they remember only their good deeds, and there is danger that to make amends for their past mistakes, they will run mad with loyalty and submission."[39]

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[38] Christopher Goodman, How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed (Geneva: 1558), pp. 179-181.

Eliot's words would have sounded strange coming from the same pulpit a hundred years earlier -- then the election day preachers had gone to great lengths to remind the people of their natural perversity and their habitual ingratitude to the good rulers God had set over them.[39a]

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[39] A Sermon Preached Before His Excellency Francis Bernard, Esq. (Boston: 1765), pp. 16, 45-46, 47-48. In 1754 Jonathan Mayhew had quoted Harrington, whom he called "a great man of the last age," as asserting "that the pretended depth and difficulty in matters of state, is a mere cheat" and that "from the beginning of the world to this day, you never found a commonwealth, where the leaders, having honesty enough, wanted skill enough to lead her to her true interest both at home and abroad." He backed off from the point, however, by adding that "It belongs not to my function to determine how far this assertion will hold true." A Sermon Preach'd in the Audience of His Excellency William Shirley, Esq. (Boston: 1754), pp. 11-12.

[39a] In the election sermon of 1638 Thomas Shepard had observed that "the temper of the multitude especially in free states where the government depends on popular election, how apt it is to desire and accept of change of government. . . Tho a people have the best governement of god over them . . . tho they have had the best governors . . . yet they are apt to change from the very best to the woorst." He attributed that among other things to the fact

Eleven years after he gave it, his sermon would have seemed tame to the point of Toryism. On the twenty-ninth day of May, 1776, the shooting had started, a formal declaration of independence loomed in the near future and when the Rev. Samuel West asked the General Court "who are the proper judges to determine, when rulers are guilty of tyranny and oppression?", he did not hesitate to answer "the publick." Then he went on to assure his audience that, as everyone knew, the public properly informed would always decide correctly.

> It is true that the publick may be imposed upon by a misrepresentation of facts; but this may be said of the publick, which can't always be said of individuals, viz. that the publick is always willing to be rightly informed, and when it has proper matter of conviction laid before it, it's judgement is always right. [40]

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that "the multitude are exceeding apt to be led by colours like birds by glasses and larkes by lures, and golden pretences which Innovators ever have," and to "a spirit of discontent which usually ariseth in a people under the strict government of god." NEH&GR, XXIV (Oct., 1870), 362-3.

[40] A Sermon Preached before the Honorable Council and the Honorable House of Representatives of the Colony of the Massachusetts-Bay (Boston: 1776), p. 27. Cf. Ezra Stiles, A History of Three of the Judges of King Charles I (Hartford: 1794), p. 274. The Essex Result of

Six years later the Rev. Zabadiel Adams put it more briefly: "The majority can, and does always govern."[41]

If men could govern themselves, then the mysterious art of government came down to establishing a state generally controlled by the people, yet having sufficient safeguards to check the occasional moments of popular aberration and to preserve inviolate those inalienable rights individuals could not give up to society. But not any people could govern themselves; the government itself would have to help promote the two great essentials of an enlightened electorate, education and virtue. In a proclamation of January 23, 1776 designed to win support for its government, the Massachusetts General Court reminded the people of the colony that it constituted "a full and free representation of themselves" unlike the royal government it had replaced, and "the present generation, therefore, may be congratulated on the acquisition

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1778 declared "that the people have always a disposition to promote their own happiness, and that when they have time to be informed, and the necessary means of information given them, they will be able to determine upon the necessary measures therefor, no man, of a tolerable acquaintance with mankind, will deny the truth of it. . . ." Taylor, Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, p. 77.

[41] A Sermon Preached Before His Excellency John Hancock, Esq. [Boston: 1782], p. 16.

of a form of Government more immediately, in all its branches under the influence and control of the people, and, therefore, more free and happy than was enjoyed by their ancestors." The Court thought it wise to add that "as a government so popular can be supported only by universal knowledge and virtue in the body of the people," it enjoined the good people of the colony to "lead sober, religious and peaceable lives, avoiding all blasphemies, contempt of the holy Scriptures, and of the Lord's day, and all other crimes and misdemeanors, all debauchery, profaneness, corruption, venality, all riotous and tumultuous proceedings, and all immoralities whatsoever."[42]

The necessity of popular education and virtue to republican states became a theme liable to automatic and near endless assertion in all discussions of government for the next thirty years. Borrowed from Montesquieu,[43] it still seemed especially congenial to New Englanders, partly because as peoples went they were educated and virtuous, partly because it recalled the substance of many an earlier Puritan sermon on affairs of state. Those learned disquisitions, however, though they certainly did not slight learning or good morals, talked of them as essentials for the ruler more than for the ruled. When they did advocate the advancement of learning among all ranks or insist on the people becoming virtuous, they did not connect these traits with the preservation of government. Every minister of the seventeenth century had flayed his congregation for their corruptions, but always on the grounds that a vicious people failed their God, their [redacted] and their mission. Few before the Revolution had ever asserted that the success of a particular form of political organization depended absolutely on an educated and virtuous public; instead, the ministers customarily rebuked the people for being unworthy of the learned and just rulers they did have.

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[42] Proclamation of the General Court, January 23, 1776 in Taylor, Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, p. 21.

[43] Montesquieu argued for the necessity of popular education and virtue to the success of republican states and contended that luxury corrupted republican government, while frugality and equality promoted it in The Spirit of the Laws, BK. III, Sect. 3; Bk. IV, Sect. 5, Bk. VII, Sect. 2; and Bk. V, Sects. 4-6.

Then the people had not been told that they ruled; they were told it after 1776, and ministers and laymen alike set themselves to considering the character of a good people as well as that of a good ruler. Did Massachusetts wish to guard against tyranny?, the Rev. Samuel Webster asked in 1777 -- then it must encourage schools and religion. "For a *wise*, a *knowing* and a *learned* people, are the least likely of any in the world to be enslaved," and "no people were ever yet given up by God to *slavery*, till they had first given themselves up to *wickedness*." The next year the Rev. Phillips Payson announced that "despotism and tyranny want nothing but wealth and force; but liberty and order are supported by knowledge and virtue." Only "the general diffusion of knowledge" would produce "that public virtue, which under God, will prove like the promises of the gospel, an impregnable bulwark to the state."[44]

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[44] Samuel Webster, *A Sermon Preached before the Honourable Council and the Honourable House of Representatives* (Boston: 1777), p. 29; Phillips Payson, *A Sermon Preached Before the Honorable Council and the Honorable House of Representatives* (Boston: 1778), pp. 15, 18. The Rev. Samuel Stillman also held it "a matter of high political importance, that knowledge should be diffused through the state, amongst all ranks of men. The propagation of literature is connected with the security of freedom. Ignorance in politics as well as in religion, is fatal in its tendency." *A Sermon Preached before the Honorable Council and House of Representatives of the State of Massachusetts Bay* (Boston: 1779), pp. 20-21. For the educational ideals and achievements of this period see Middlekauf, *Ancients and Axioms*, pp. 113-127.

Other old values as well needed only some suitable modifications to serve quite usefully in interpreting the events that overtook New England after 1765. The American Revolution fitted as neatly into the pattern of the Jeremiad and confirmed the Puritan economic virtues just as effectively as King Phillips War. England, subject to the temptations of all great empires, had become corrupt through vice and luxury and attempted to oppress America as a result. God had permitted it because America suffered from the same sins, though to a lesser degree, and the experience of war would purge her as it had in the past and restore her to the pristine virtues of industry and frugality.

> Our degeneracies, we must conclude from the light of nature and revelation have contributed to the presen[t] calamities. God, the infinitely wise Governor of the universe, may (and I trust, almost to a degree of assurance, doth) design by the contest now existing between Britain and the Continent, to establish us in the enjoyment of our liberties, besides favouring the several colonies with an enlargement of them . . . and it becomes us to impute it to our transgressions that we must pass through a scene of difficulties ere we can be brought to the enjoyment of them. 45

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45. William Gordon, A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Representatives (Watertown: 1775), pp. 20-21. *Cf*. Samuel Langdon, Government Corrupted by Vice,

The Revolution was a revolution still: if Puritan economic values came through it relatively intact, Puritan political theory underwent some strange distortions. For the first time since the days of Israel Stoughton laymen advocated frequent rotation of public officeholders and ministers seconded them on the grounds that too much honor and deference tended to corrupt.[46] Others, perhaps ignorant of John Saffin or unfamiliar with the God who assigned men to their proper places, found it difficult to denounce British policy as slavery without advocating the abolition of Negro slavery too.[47]

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and Recovered by Righteousness (Watertown: 1775), pp. 19-22. Perry Miller has treated this theme in a larger context in "From the Covenant to the Revival," James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison ed., Religion in American Life (Princeton: 1961), I, 322-344.

[46] Return of Lexington to the proposed Constitution of 1778 in Taylor, Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, p. 67. Phillips Payson, A Sermon, p. 29. Zabadiel Adams, on the other hand, though he favored some rotation in office, thought it should be infrequent. A Sermon, p. 19.

[47] Samuel Stillman, A Sermon, pp. 33-34. Cf. Bailyn, Pamphlets of the American Revolution, pp. 140-150.

The greatest changes came in the doctrine of representation. Men being by nature equal, each had a natural right to legislate, casting his vote along with his fellows in a general assembly of the whole body politic. When mankind had become too numerous for this assembly to function effectively, men had appointed "delegates to represent the people in a general assembly," and it was a "sacred and undeniable right" that "no one be obliged to submit to any law, except such as are made either by himself or his representative." The usefulness of this theory at the time Samuel West expounded it, 1776, could not have been more obvious:

> If representation and legislation are inseparably connected, it follows, that when great numbers have emigrated unto a foreign land, and are so far removed from the parent state, that they neither are nor can be properly represented by the government from which they have emigrated, that then nature itself points out the necessity of assuming to themselves the powers of legislation, and they have a right to consider themselves as a separate state from the other, and as such to form themselves into a body politick.[48]

West did not speak merely as an apologist for colonial interests, inventing arguments to justify events after they had happened. The problems of taxation and representation had become terribly real to the colonists after 1765, and New Englanders, like all other Americans, had been forced to examine what those terms meant and to evaluate their old doctrines in the light of their investigations. The eighteenth century ministry, following the theories of the seventeenth, had originally held that governors had a calling from God which they received through popular suffrage but which did not make them responsible to the people. The latter ought to vote for a man not because he represented them, but because he did not represent them, being wiser, more learned and more virtuous than they. The lower house of the General Court never fitted this theory and the office of governor ceased to after 1692 when it became an appointment of the crown, with the result that the election preacher concentrated his attention on the council, although in the eighteenth century it was rapidly becoming the least important of the three branches of government. Thus Samuel Fisk in 1731: "we have also a continual growth of Families of Distinction, Education and Substance; which yield an increase of candidates for the Council Board."[49]

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[48] *A Sermon,* p. 20. *Cf*. the instructions to the representatives of the town of Boston, May 30, 1776, in Taylor, *Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth,* p. 40.

The lower house received only scant attention from the ministers, and though generally recognized by everyone as "representative" in some sense, its character had gone largely undiscussed. By 1741 the doctrines of the good ruler had lost much of their weight even when applied to the council, the "land bank" house of representatives of that year purging the upper house's membership in order to put in new men more amenable to their views. But the land bankers had no positive ideology to justify their act. Their plan came to nothing when the governor vetoed thirteen of their fourteen new councilors, and in a few years as the land bank frenzy subsided the council resumed its old composition and character through sheer force of inertia. Only with the Stamp Act crisis and the events leading to Revolution did the lower house try once again to manipulate the membership of the upper in wholesale fashion; the next time a royal governor would have to veto thirteen councillors, the year would be 1774 and the General Court would shortly retaliate in kind by deposing the governor.

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[49] The Character of the Candidate, for civil Government, especially for the Council (Boston: 1731), p. 40. My thanks to Mr. Robert Zemsky for bringing this quotation to my attention.

The pressure of the Revolution made every man a legislator just as during the Marian upheaval every man had been a magistrate. The actual legislature in turn became a mechanical convenience made necessary by the size of the population, the membership of both houses acting only as agents and not as independent magistrates. Writers could see no point in delegating powers to representatives if the people could not control them by instructions and frequent election, and if the representation was now apportioned equitably:

> Freemen submitting themselves to the Controul of others, and giving up the entire Right of Legislation and Taxation without reserving any Share to themselves, can receive no possible equivalent for the Concession; for they become absolute Slaves; But if they delegate a Number from themselves to conduct these important Articles of State, over whom they retain a suitable Controul, they enjoy a qualified Liberty, in many Respects preferable to what they relinquish--
>
> If this Representation is equal, it is perfect; as far as it deviated from this Equality, so far

> it is imperfect and approaches to that State of Slavery. . . .[50]

New Englanders had finally thought out a clear philosophy of representation that would apply to both houses of the legislature and to the other offices of government, though in the process they had done violence to the principle of calling in their original political ideology at the same time that they had elevated the principle of compact to new importance. If the "majority of the state is the only judge when the general good does require it," then an elected legislature functioned solely to express the will of the majority.

> The Rights of representation should be so equally and impartially distributed, that the representatives should have the same views, and interests with the people at large. They should think, feel, and act like them, and in fine, should be an exact miniature of their constituents. They should be . . . the whole body politic, with all its property, rights and privileges, reduced to a smaller scale, every part being diminished in just proportion.[51]

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[50] Resolutions of an Essex County Convention, April 25, 1776, in Taylor, Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, p. 38.

[51] The Essex Result of 1778, *ibid.*, p. 81. *Cf.* Bailyn, Pamphlets of the American Revolution, pp. 91-99.

The "Essex Result" of 1778, from which this statement comes, is often considered a conservative document because its author defined "majority" to include "those who hold a major part of the part of the property in the state" in addition to a numerical majority of people.[52] Yet at least he wrote in terms of representation and major parts and never mentioned callings or good rulers. The Result grew out of the colony's experience with Britain after 1765 and it could have served to explain why the British Parliament could not pass a law binding the lives or property of Americans, but that was not its intended function. However much the theory could have been used to justify past resistance, its author put it forward as a plan for future action -- as the basis of a new government for the state of Massachusetts. British policy might have forced the doctrine of equality on the people of the former colony, but then they adopted it with enthusiasm and applied it to fields outside imperial relations. The popular convention which drew up the actual constitution of Massachusetts in 1780 justified the government it had created on grounds almost identical to the Essex Result, assigning the upper house of the legislature the job of representing property (by making a fairly high property requirement a condition of membership) and the lower one that of representing people. "The House of Representatives is intended as the Representative of the Persons and the Senate, of the Property of the Common Wealth." As for the governor, once a ruler called by God, he was now "emphatically the Representative of the whole People, being chosen not by one Town or county, but the People at large." Only such a person could be entrusted with the power of vetoing legislation and commanding the militia.[53]

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[52] The Essex Result, ibid., pp. 79, 82.

The rule of the wise, just and virtuous had ended, at least in theory. For the first time the General Court found itself told (in the address of Pittsfield in 1776) that it and all representative bodies, "being but the servants of the people cannot be greater than their Masters, and must be responsible to them." To affirm the contrary, in effect to insist on the God-given status of rulers, "appears to us to be the rankest Kind of Toryism, the self same monster we are fighting against."[54]

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[53] Address of the Constitutional Convention to their Constituents, 1780 in ibid., pp. 125, 126. Pole quite correctly points out in "Historians and the Problem of Early American Democracy," pp. 640-41, 641n., that this leads into a world of political theory wholly unlike that of today, yet it also seems pertinent to observe that the doctrine also led into a world of political theory in many ways wholly unlike that of the period immediately preceding the Revolution.

Pittsfield may have been braver than most towns. The deferential habits that had aided the older doctrines lingered on, and so, indeed, did the doctrines themselves. The transition had occurred too rapidly and abruptly to produce anything like a symmetrical body of theory. Ministers continued to talk of the character of good rulers in the same sermons in which they hailed equality and majority rule, neither explicitly renouncing their former opinions nor always letting them fade quietly away. But they simultaneously and not always consistently asserted new notions that designated as self-evident truths the infallability of the properly informed public, the natural right of legislation and the strict accountability of representatives to their constituents.

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54. Taylor, Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, p. 28.

The doctrines Pittsfield had advanced took time to reach their full impact and displace earlier concepts because in 1776 (or 1787) they lacked the depth and definition they could only receive as a result of their actual application. As in 1630, so in 1776, New Englanders had wiped away their past and undertaken to build a new social organization founded on ideas never before put into practice: whatever ambiguities they contained would have to be resolved within the body politic itself, whatever meaning they had would, once again, have to be determined by their result in action. Contemporaries at least realized the uniqueness of what they did:

> The freemen inhabiting the territory of the Massachusetts-Bay are now forming a political society for themselves. Perhaps their situation is more favorable in some respects, for erecting a free government, than any other people were ever favored with. The attachment to old forms, which usually embarrasses, has no place amongst them. They have the history and experience of all States before them. Mankind have been toiling through ages for their information; and the philosophers and learned men of antiquity have trimmed their midnight lamps, to transmit to them instruction. [55]

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[55] The Essex Result, ibid., p. 75.

Despite the benefit of the collective experience of mankind the freemen inhabiting the territory of the Massachusetts-Bay chose to form their society on the same mythical principle as they had a hundred and fifty years before: a compact. This time the participants considered themselves equals, but that only made their venture even more radically unprecedented than in 1630 -- men had never been equal before because they had never thought they were. John Winthrop had built his holy commonwealth on the twin principles of voluntarism and subordination, a previously untried combination that turned out to work for a century and a half, until it was overthrown by exactly the same method that established it. Winthrop's descendants in 1776 had done as he had done, rejecting existing society as hopelessly corrupt and constructing in its place a new commonwealth which they confidently expected would serve as the model for the reformation of a wicked Europe and which they planned according to theories they thought timeless although they were the first ever to practice them. They had had to fight a war where their ancestors had simply removed three thousands miles; otherwise the parallels were exact.

The City on a Hill had fallen on its own sword, and by way of final irony, if it deserved any epitath at all it would certainly be the motto of a popish queen who died a victim to Scottish Protestantism and English dynastic interests:

IN ~~THE~~ END IS MY BEGINNING.

APPENDIX

THE MASSACHUSETTS FRANCHISE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In 1860 John Gorham Palfrey estimated that about one white adult male in four or five in the Massachusetts of 1670 enjoyed the privileges of freemanship.[1] Subsequently the one-in-five figure took on an almost mystical significance as later studies applied it indiscriminately to all times and places in the Bay Colony's history and confused it with the percentage of adult males who were church members. Only recently have several historians studying specific Massachusetts towns challenged Palfrey's figures and given evidence of a much larger franchise than he supposed.[2] All studies of whatever period, however, have relied exclusively on what might be termed the "official list" of freemen, the central catalogue kept by the General Court and reprinted in the back of five of the six volumes of Nathaniel Shurtleff's edition of the Massachusetts Bay Company records. No one has appreciated the great number of men actually made free that the official lists omits.

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[1] History of New England (Boston: 1876), III, 41, nt. 3.

[2] For other studies of the seventeenth century freemanship see B. Katherine Brown, "Freemanship in Puritan Massachusetts," American Historical Review, LIX (1954), 865-883 and "Puritan Democracy: A Case Study," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, L (1963), 377-396; Samuel Eliot Morison, Builders of the Bay Colony, Appendix; Richard C. Simmons, "Freemanship in Early Massachusetts: Some Suggestions and a Case Study," William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, XIX (1962), 422-428.

The General Court after first converting freemanship in 1630 from membership in a joint stock company into the right to vote and hold office in a commonwealth, restricted it to church members in 1631 and in 1634 declared that it alone and no other authority in the Bay Colony had the right to make freemen. But eight years later the court reversed this last policy and on May 20, 1642 passed a highly significant law allowing "Every court in this Jurisdiction, where two Magistrates are present" the same right to make freemen as it possessed.[3] This amounted to giving the power to the inferior courts held quarterly in each of Massachusetts Bay's four counties: Suffolk, Essex, Middlesex and Norfolk. In 1645 and again in 1647 William Pynchon received the same right for the jurisdiction of Springfield in the Connecticut River Valley, a right he and his successors exercised until 1660 when the newly founded Hampshire County Court took it over.[4]

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[3] Mass. Rec., II, 2-3.

The General Court had ordered both the county courts and the Pynchons to certify the names of all those whom they made freemen to the secretary of the colony, but after the first few times they apparently stopped sending the names or he stopped recording them. A careful search of printed court records yields 208 men in Essex and southern Norfolk counties and forty-nine in the Springfield jurisdiction who received the freemanship between 1643 and 1664, but whose names do not appear on the official lists.[5] These figures are not merely substantial in themselves, they point to the potential existence of a much larger body of freemen whose names were recorded on records now lost. Even these Essex and Norfolk records are incomplete, lacking the accounts of the Ipswish sessions before 1646 and the Salisbury and Hampton sessions both before 1648 and from 1654 to 1662, while the Suffolk County Court's book for the years before 1670 has disappeared entirely.

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[4] Mass. Rec., II, 109, 224.

[5] Essex County Court Records, I, 53, 68, 91, 93, 94, 96, 109, 111, 114, 139, 154, 158, 161, 165, 166, 167, 170, 170-71, 183, 184, 185, 186, 197, 201, 205, 218, 223, 232, 237, 238, 240, 249, 253, 260, 270, 276, 336, 362, 369, 371, 380, 387, 419; II, 11, 47, 55, 67, 97, 111, 161, 180, 195, 196, 255, 278, 300, 302, 305, 347, 400; III, 47, 59, 63, 108, 137, 150, 161; Colonial Justice in Western Massachusetts (1639-1702) The Pynchon Court Record (Cambridge, Mass.: 1961), pp. 215-216, 252, 257, 260.

The Middlesex County Court records remain intact in manuscript, yet a search of them for the period 1649 to 1664 yields only the suspiciously low total of four men made free, none of whom is on the official list.[6] Since Cambridge served as the county seat, most church members in Middlesex may have found it just as convenient to go into Boston and take the freeman's oath there before the General Court rather than their county court, but other evidence points to poor record keeping as a second source of this low number of freemen. In Charlestown, a Middlesex town bordering on Cambridge, 118 men joined the church between 1632 and 1647 and only eighteen of them failed to present themselves before the General Court to take the freeman's oath. Yet from 1648, the year the county court actually began to hold sessions at Cambridge, to 1660 twenty-seven men joined the Charlestown church and only five of them ventured into nearby Boston to take the oath. At the same time a list of Charlestown freemen prepared in 1677 contains the names of eighty-one men of whom at least fourteen are not on the official records, while eight of these fourteen are among those who joined the Charlestown church between 1647 and 1660.[7] The obvious inference is that they took their freeman's oaths before the Middlesex County Court and a careless clerk failed to record them. If this is true of Charlestown, then what of Sudbury, Watertown, Reading, etc.?

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[6] These four with the page numbers in which they can be found in the Middlesex County Court Records are Ralph Shepard (I, 16), Jonathan Grant (I, 158), Josiah Haimes or Hayms of Sudbury and Jonathan Poole of Reading (both I, 288).

This large body of men made free by the county courts but not on the General Court's records explains some previously puzzling phenomena. It, and not any deliberate flouting of the laws, probably accounts for most of the instances of men serving as town deputies to the General Court even though the Court's official list does not record them as ever becoming freemen. Thomas Fisk, for example, represented Wenham six times between 1671 and 1686 without ever taking the freeman's oath before the General Court -- he took it instead before the Essex County Court in 1661.[8] Much has been made of the possibility of nonchurch members serving as deputies or voting in defiance of the law, but such speculation rests mainly on supposition. Individuals who successfully break laws by definition leave few traces behind them or they would not be successful. Where the authorities caught unqualified men voting they punished them, sometimes harshly: the Middlesex County Court ordered two men of Woburn severely whipped and fined £ 20 each for precisely this crime.[9] Some men not belonging to any church may have voted, but if their numbers had ever become substantial the Massachusetts Government would probably have taken action against them.

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[7] William I. Buddington, The History of the First Church of Charlestown (Boston: 1845), p. 248; Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, p. 167; Mass. Rec., II, 227; Richard Frothingham, Jr., The History of Charlestown, Massachusetts, p. 181. The eight are Mr. Thomas Shepard, Lt. Rand Nichols, Edward Wilson, Mr. William Foster, Edward Brazier, Deacon John Cutler, Lawrence Douse, and Samuel Ward. The others are Jno. Whitman, Deacon Aaron Ludkin, William Symmes, Jno. Knight, Thomas Lord and John Farmer.

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[8] Essex County Court Records, II, 305; Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. 2, 485, 507; V, 211, 266, 421, 514.

[9] Middlesex County Court Records, I, 175. Similarly, the Essex County Court fined Mr. Joseph Grafton, Sr. for putting in a vote for his son, not a freeman, during an election for deputies from Salem. Essex County Court Records, IV, 163.

The power of the county courts to make freemen between 1642 and 1664 also explains the sharp falling off in the number of men made free by the General Court in the same period and its sudden increase after 1664 -- for in August of that year the General Court repealed the county courts' authority.[10] The slightly liberalized provisions of the franchise law of 1664 are sometimes offered as the cause for this increase, but their terms probably did not qualify very many nonchurch members to take the freeman's oath. The 1664 law continued the church membership requirement, but provided that individuals not in full communion with any church might also take the oath if they could submit evidence of religious orthodoxy and had enough property to be "rateable to the country in a single country rate, after the usual manner of valuation, in the place where they live, to the full value of tenne shillings."[11] Historians have not understood the real meaning and restrictiveness of this provision. B. Katherine Brown has even argued that the law required an individual to have only ten shillings worth of total property, an interpretation that would qualify almost every man in Massachusetts to vote. The certificates submitted by prospective freemen make it perfectly clear that the ten shilling figure referred to the tax paid and not the total value of the property taxed. Thus, Nathaniel Jacques of Ipswich, admitted freeman under this provision July 9, 1684, produced a statement from his town clerk certifying that he had "paid to a single Rate without head [tax] the sume of Ten Shillings (or above) [for] several years [.]"[12]

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[10] Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. 2, 118.

Prospective freemen had not only to pay ten shillings in property tax, they had to pay it in a single country rate. This was a fixed method of valuation by which each individual paid a head tax of 1S.6P. and a property tax of one penny per pound of assessed value. The General Court often ordered several country rates at once, so that merely examining what a given individual paid on a given tax list will not reveal whether he met the property qualification for the franchise or not unless the number of country rates which the tax levied is also taken into account.[13] At one penny on the pound, an individual who paid ten shillings in a single country rate would have had to own property with a total assessed value of £ 120. This was a substantial sum at the time, and then as now assessed value was often only a fraction of real value. Robert Keayne, the Boston merchant, admitted in 1653 that he had never paid taxes on more than £ 1,000 of his £ 4,000 estate.[14] The new property qualification of 1664 could hardly have aided very many men seeking the freemanship.

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[11] *Ibid.*, 117-18.

[12] Mass. Archives, CVI, 500b.

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[13] The tax laws are in the Mass. Rec., II, 213; IV, Pt. 1, 155. On October 15, 1673, to take one example, the General Court levied a tax of one and three-quarters rates. Ibid., IV, Pt. 2, 568.

[14] Apologia, pp. 331-333.

Even after August, 1664, however, some church members continued to take the freeman's oath before the county courts without their names appearing on the General Court's list. In October, 1664 the General Court reempowered the county courts to give the freeman's oath, but reserved the actual right to make men free to itself.[15] An individual unable to get to Boston in person could have the minister of his town send a certificate of his church membership to the general court, which would make him free and then authorize his county's court to administer the oath to him. In theory, every person who took the oath before a county court after 1664 would have first had his name recorded by the colony secretary on the General Court's official list of freemen. In fact, while the names of most such men do appear on both county and General Court lists, a few seem to have still been sworn by the county court without the colony secretary ever writing their names down on the official list. The Hampshire County records show ten such men, the Essex County records twenty-two, the Suffolk County records thirty (including none other than the Rev. Increase Mather).[16] The Massachusetts Archives contain certificates of sixteen of these sixty-two men, the Colony Secretary apparently omitting to transcribe their names onto the General Court's list. As for the rest, either the county courts kept up their pre-1664 practices in a few limited instances or, more likely, these men filed certificates too which the colony secretary promptly lost. The latter interpretation receives support from the fact that two of the men taking the oath before the Hampshire County Court are explicitly described as having been previously made free by the General Court even though the Archives do not contain any certificates for them.[17]

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[15] Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. 2, 134.

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[16] Those in Hampshire County are Benjamin Cooly, Nathaniel Pritchard, James Warriner, John Warner, Joseph Parsons, Reice Bedortha, John Dumbleton, John Leonard, Thomas Bancroft and Pelatiah Glover. Parsons and Bancroft are listed as freemen on the Springfield records as of 1663, although men of these names are also on the General Court records as taking the freeman's oath in 1669 and 1678 respectively. Pynchon Court Record, pp. 375, 376. Those in Essex County (with the places where they appear on the Essex County Court Records): James Pecker (III, 451), Robert Savory, Joseph Palmer, Jno. Burbanke, Jno. Tennie, Joseph Pike, Thomas Whitcher and Steven Webster (all on IV, 24), Jeremiah Jewett and Lott Conant (both, IV, 38), Mr. Andrew Wiggen (Iv, 185), Mr. Jno Raynor (Iv, 237), Samuel Plumber (IV, 288), Mr. William Symonds (IV, 329), Thomas Jeggells (V, 255), Charles Annis (VIII, 161), John Simons and Joseph Bayly (both, VII, 354), Samuel Balch, "Jo." Herrick and Samuel Dodge (all three, VII, 360), and Thomas Dorman (VIII, 126). Those in Suffolk County (with the places where they appear on the Suffolk County Court Records): Nathaniel Eaton (I, 80), Joshua Beale and Joseph Beale (both, I, 146), Thomas Bacon (I, 475), Samuel Ward (II, 631), Thomas Mihel (II, 673), John Dyer (II, 694), Joshua Lincoln (II, 717), John Weld, Jr. (II, 869), Jonathan Avery (II,884), James Tucker (II, 955), Increase Mather and Samuel Phillips (II, 1015), Timothy Stevens, John Ruggles, John Chandler, Mr. Paul Dudley and Mr. Anthony Checkley (all II, 1060-61), Simon Peck (II, 1097), John Battelle, Jabez Totman, Thomas Baker, Thomas Walter, and Obadiah Gill (all II, 1151), and Mr. Joseph Pynchon (II, 1159). Also made free in Suffolk County: Thomas Leavingworth, Samuel Worden, James Burgess, John Blackwell, Esq. and John Loder. Inferiour Court of Pleas, pp. 143, 146, 151 and 152. There may be others but duplication of names makes it impossible to tell.

Edward Rawson, the colony secretary and the man who kept the records that have become the earlier volumes of the Massachusetts Archives, did, in fact, do a notoriously bad job of record keeping. James Savage, who ought to have known, wrote that "the volumes of records exhibit strange evidence in many places of his incompetence or more wonderful neglect."[18] Not only did Rawson apparently lose certificates sent him by the ministers, he frequently failed to record the names of the men whose certificates he managed to retain. Aside from the sixteen individuals from Hampshire, Essex and Suffolk Counties previously mentioned, between 1667 and 1685 he also did not record the names of at least forty-six others who presented certificates to him and whom the General Court made freemen.[19] In no instance where these forty-six freemen came from Essex, Suffolk or Hampshire counties are they listed as freemen on the records of their respective counties, which probably means that they took their oaths before the General Court itself. It is perfectly possible that many other men similarly took their oaths before the General Court and that Rawson both failed to record their names on the General Court list and lost their certificates so that no trace of their freemanship remains.

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[17] The two are Benjamin Cooly and Nathaniel Pritchard, listed as taking the oath at Springfield on September 26, 1665 after having been admitted into the freemanship by the General Court on May 3, 1665. Pynchon Court Record, p. 375. The Essex County Court Records similarly list Andrew Wiggin as "being allowed by the General Court" (IV, 185).

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[18] Genealogical Dictionary of New England, III,

[19] The forty-six (with the number of the documents on which their names occur in volume CVI of the Massachusetts Archives) are: Freegrace Bendall (489), Samuel Clark, Jno. Winborn (?), and Thomas Redding (all three 493a), Thomas Clark, Edward Spauldron, Joseph Harowall, Samuel Fletcher, John Barret, and Cornelius Waldo (all 493c), Samuel Show (494), Samuel Belcher, Joseph Hollis, and Daniel Denison (all three 494b), Richard Dodge (494c), Simon York and Clap Desire (both 494a), Andrew Gardiner and Thomas Boylston (both 495d), Moses Gilaman (494a), John Shaw, Sr., Ephrahim Hunt, John Hunt, James Ford, and John Simons (all five 495b), Robert Stiles and Ephrahim Dormand (496b), George Russell, Esq. and Thomas Lambert (both 497), Henry Groom and Thomas Skiny (both 496c), Samuel Marsh and Thomas Meekins (both 499b), John Baxter, Nathaniel Wales, and Benjamin Savil (all three 501), William Ward, Jr. (501a), Samuel Blanchard, Thomas

All told this study has turned up 379 new freemen, but they in turn indicate that many other men may have also been made free without any evidence of it surviving because of the incompleteness of the records: thanks to Rawson's incompetence and the general inefficiency of the period every man in Massachusetts might have taken the freeman's oath without our ever knowing about it. These 379 names do conclusively prove one thing: it is impossible to estimate the number of men actually legally empowered to

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Shepard, Nicholas Moade, Thomas Rand, William Jameson, and Benjamin Phillips (all 501b), Mr. John Danforth and Mr. Joseph Capon (both 501c), and Corporal Seth Story (509a). There were a number of other possible freemen, but their names were indecipherable.

vote and hold office in seventeenth century Massachusetts. It is not impossible, though, to make some educated guesses about the number of men potentially able to vote, because for many towns we can compare lists of inhabitants with the names of members in full communion on relatively complete church records. Not all free, white male church members became freemen, but all could and those who did not violated the colony's official ethic, just as nonvoting citizens today violate our own publicly proclaimed ideal of full voter participation.

Working with local church and town records, the historian escapes one set of statistical difficulties only to confront another. The local minister or town clerk may not have kept his records any better than Edward Rawson kept the colony's, though at least he had fewer names to deal with and perhaps more time to put them in order. But even where the records were accurately kept they contain certain inherent deficiencies. Massachusetts had no official census until 1754, and tax lists, the rolls of owners of property, the lists of names of those taking the oath of allegiance, and other sources include both too few and too many names for anyone interested in discovering the size of a town's adult male population. Tax lists in particular do not usually include the names of adults still living with their parents and of servants but they do include legal minors living apart from their parents and paying their own taxes. Lists of property owners contain the names of nonresidents as well, if they held property in the town, and the General Court ordered the oath of allegiance administered to all males over the age of sixteen[20] even though the franchise law of 1664 fixed the minimum voting age at twenty-four.[21] The church records present their own peculiar problems because not every resident of a town attended the church of that town. Some individuals living on the edge of one town joined the church in an adjoining town, and still others who had previously lived in one town and belonged to its church never transferred their membership to the church of the new town to which they moved, preferring instead to retain a tie with their former brethren by continuing as members of their old church.

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[20] Mass. Rec., V, 193.

[21] B. Katherine Brown gives it as twenty-one in "Puritan Democracy: A Case Study," but the 1664 law (Mass. Rec., IV, Pt. 2, 118) clearly gives it as twenty-four, and all the certificates in the Massachusetts Archives use that age as well. No law explicitly states what the voting age was before 1664, and it may have been twenty-one.

Despite these qualifications, comparison of local records produces the most accurate available estimates of the extent of church membership and, therefore, of the number of males eligible to vote.[21a] In the calculations below no attempt has been made to compensate for names of minors on tax lists or property rolls, but obvious non-residents have been eliminated from the latter, and the number of names on the lists of those taking the oath of allegiance has been reduced by thirty percent in order to eliminate most of those between sixteen and twenty-four.[22]

[21a] Comparison of the seventeenth century estimates of the number of church members with seventeenth century estimates of population will not yield very useful results because the estimators are so unreliable. For example, Edward Johnson estimated the populatimn of Hingham (presumably in 1650) as sixty families while the deacon of the Hingham church gave it as one hundred families only seven years later. Either or both could be wrong. Johnson put the number of church members in Dedham at 70 in 1650, yet the rate list for 1648 includes sixty-two male church members alone, and there must have been at least an equal number of women to put Johnson's margin of error at at least one hundred percent. On the other hand the deacon of Dedham estimated 166 families lived in town in 1657, an equally fantastic figure considering that there were only eighty-four male heads of families on the tax list of 1659. Wonder Working Providences, pp. 116, 180; 3 Coll. MHS, I, 49, 150. Dedham Records, II, 152-3; IV, 6-7.

ROXBURY: "A Note of the estates and persons of the Inhabitants of Rocksbury," compiled about 1639 or 1640 has sixty-nine male names on it. Sixty (or eighty-seven percent) belonged to the Roxbury church, and four of the remaining nine eventually joined it.[23] Four decades later, however, the situation had changed radically. One hundred sixty men took the oath of allegiance sometime in the fall or winter of 1678. Subtracting forty-eight (thirty percent) to eliminate those aged twenty-four or younger leaves 112 men of voting age. Only thirty-five men on the list belonged to the church, while another two were freemen even though their names were not on the church records, giving thirty-seven eligible voters out of 112 men (thirty percent).[24]

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[22] It is not necessary to subtract any percentage from the number of church members on the list because few if any men joined the church before their twenty-fourth birthday.

[23] Based on a comparison of the householders list in Boston Rec., VI, 4-5 and the list of church members in ibid., pp. 73-84.

CAMBRIDGE: Cambridge has far less complete records than Roxbury, but B. Katherine Brown has already studied them and printed the results in "Puritan Democracy: A Case Study." She finds that of the 112 male householders in Cambridge in 1652, eighty-two had joined the church by 1658 and eighty-six (or 76.8 percent) by 1668. A land division list for 1665 contains the names of 119 men, seventy-four of whom (or sixty-two percent) belonged to the church, while four others joined within the next three years.[25]

DORCHESTER: Dorchester started off with and maintained a relatively large number of adult males belonging to its church, possibly as a result of the homogeneity of the town's population. On March 18, 1637/8 the town divided up the "Neck" (now South Boston) among the "present inhabitants" including ninety-five males. Some of these men were probably absentees, but even so seventy-two men (or 75.7 percent of the total) were freemen and/or church members, including at least ten who belonged to churches other than that of Dorchester.[26]

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[24] The list of those taking the oath is in the Suffolk County Court Records, II, 969-970.

[25] "Puritan Democracy: A Case Study," pp. 384, 388.

The town did not witness as marked a decline in the relative numbers of male church members as did Roxbury. Two hundred and three males over sixteen took the oath of allegiance to the colony in January, 1679, or, subtracting thirty percent (sixty-one men), 142 males of voting age. Fifty-nine of them belonged to the church and another five were freemen though not on the church rolls, so that about forty-five percent of Dorchester's male population could vote in 1679. Still another ten men then over age twenty-four had joined the church by 1689.[27]

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[26] Based on a comparison of the list in Boston Rec., IV, 29-31, with the names in Records of the First Church at Dorchester and the Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society, History of the Town of Dorchester, Massachusetts (Boston: 1859), pp. 38-148. Only the General Court's list of freemen was used.

[27] The list of oath takers is in the Suffolk County Court Records, II, 970-972.

CHARLESTOWN: A "list of the names of the inhabitants of this town" compiled in January, 1635/6 gives the names of seventy males. Nineteen others not on the list but admitted as inhabitants in 1635 bring the total to eighty-nine, of whom fifty were church members (counting several admitted in the first half of 1636). Another three were freemen though not members of the Charlestown church, so that fifty-three men (sixty percent of the total) were then eligible to vote. Eight others on the list joined the church by 1643.[28]

By March 1, 1657/8 matters had changed. A list of property owners of that date contains 202 names, thirty-three of them widows or obvious nonresidents. Of the 169 males remaining seventy-four belonged to the church and another six had taken the freeman's oath though not listed as members of that particular church. This amounts to eighty potential voters (forty-seven percent), while still another thirteen joined the church by 1677 so that a little over half the men on the list had or eventually gained the right to vote.[29] By 1677, however, the percentage of male inhabitants belonging to the church had fallen even lower. A list of householders taken March 11, 1677/8 contains the names of 191 adult males (not counting twenty-seven men legally residents of Charlestown but actually living and attending church in Stoneham, Malden or Chelsea). Sixty of the 191 belonged to the church, another five were freemen only, giving a total of sixty-nine men (thirty-six percent) able to vote. At least thirteen others (6.7 percent of the total) became church members by 1691.[30]

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[28] Based on a comparison of the names in Buddington, The History of the First Church of Charlestown, pp. 247-258 with the list of inhabitants in Frothingham, The History of Charlestown, pp. 84-85.

DEDHAM: The Dedham church records do not go beyond 1671, but they still have a special interest because the church was not founded until 1638, after the establishment of proof of a work of saving grace as a prerequisite for membership in New England churches. The Dedham church covenant itself explicitly included this test as a requirement for admission: "only visible saints or believers were to be received and ought to make their faith and holynes visibly not only by ~~their~~ baptisme . . . not only by a civile restrained life and some religious duties performed . . . but such as by a profession of an inward worke of faith and grace declared by an holy life sutable thereto may persuade the church to imbrace them. . . ."[31] Despite that rigorous requirement, in 1648 sixty-three out of the eighty-eight adult males on the town's tax list were church members (71.5 percent). Later tax lists show the figure as fifty-eight percent in 1659, fifty-four percent in 1664 and fifty-six percent in 1668.[32]

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[29] Boston Rec., III, 76-81.

[30] Frothingham, The History of Charlestown, pp. 247-50.

SALEM: The number of eligible voters in Salem can be calculated for the year 1638 only. Salem was the oldest church in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and may have been Separatist for part of its history, so that in contrast to Dedham many of its members probably joined at a time when admissions requirements did notinclude proof of having experienced saving grace. Yet the Salem church embraced a much smaller proportion of the town's adult males than the Dedham church did of Dedham's male population. Of the 206 males on a list of grants of marsh and meadow lands ordered divided among the inhabitants on December 25, 1637, only seventy were church members counting those who joined in 1638 when the list was undoubtedly actually drawn up. Another eleven were on the General Court's list of freemen though not on the Salem church rolls, for a total of eighty-one potential voters (39.5 percent of the total). Thirty-two men (17.5 percent) not then church members did join the church by 1650, so that a majority of the adult males living in Salem in 1638 did eventually qualify to vote.[33]

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[31] Dedham Records, I, 4.

[32] Dedham Records, II, 152-3; IV, 6-7, 90-91, 158-9.

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[33] Based on a comparison of the list of property owners in Town Records of Salem, pp. 61, 101-104 with the list of members of the Salem church in James Duncan Phillips, Salem in the Seventeenth Century (Boston: 1933), pp. 344-355.

WATERTOWN: Watertown's church records do not exist for the period before 1686, but the town was close enough to Boston for most qualified males to be able to take the freeman's oath before the General Court. The percentage of male residents on the official list of freemen at least provides a minimum estimate of the percentage belonging to the church. On July 15, 1636 the freemen of Watertown "lotted out" a grant of land "to all Townsmen then inhabiting," a total of 120 grantees. One was a woman and one (Sir Richard Saltonstall) an obvious nonresident, but of the 118 males remaining, at least fifty-eight (forty-nine percent) were freemen.[34] A few church members in every town generally failed to take the freeman's oath no matter how easily they might have gotten to the General Court or a county court, while in Watertown itself a few more had probably simply not had an opportunity to go into Boston while the General Court was in session,[35] so that a majority of the townsmen probably did belong to the church in 1636. Certainly a majority did in 1650 when 105 out of 207 male property owners (50.7 percent) were on the General Court's list of freemen.[36] The town probably had other freemen as well, for in 1650 the Middlesex County Court had been in operation in adjoining Cambridge for over a year.

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[34] Watertown Records, I, 3-6 (second pagination). The names of the freemen came only from the General Court's list and include all those made free by March, 1636/7.

[35] Distance as much as apathy prevented church members from becoming freemen. Even after the establishment of

BOSTON: Inquiries into the extent of male church membership in Boston must end in querries rather than conclusions because the peculiar situation of the town exaggerated all those factors mentioned earlier as leading to statistical inaccuracies. After a thorough study of the Boston records Darrett Rutman concluded in Winthrop's Boston that a majority of the adult males in the town belonged to the church in the 1630's, but that after the Antinomian crisis of 1637-8 requirements for church membership grew so strict

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the county courts and of their power to give the freeman's oath, the deputies claimed many people still had great difficulty getting to a court at which they could become freemen. Mass. Archives, CVI, 507.

[36] Richard C. Simmons, "Freemanship in Early Massachusetts," p. 427.

and new immigrants and old settlers so worldly that the percentage of adult male church members fell sharply until by 1650 less than half the town's male population had joined the church. A graph accompanying the text of Winthrop's Boston gives the number of male church members as about two hundred out of about 440 adult males in 1644, about 213 out of about 470 in 1645 and perhaps 245 out of about 610 in 1650.[37]

On the other hand Samuel C. Clough identified only 202 male owners of property on the Shawmut peninsula in his observations on the Boston Book of Possessions, a list of property owners compiled in late 1643 and early 1644. At least six of these 202 are clearly nonresidents, but of the remaining 196, 144 (73.5 percent) had joined the church by March, 1643/4 and another nine joined by 1645.[38]

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[37] Rutman, Winthrop's Boston, pp. 142-148.

[38] Based on a comparison of the names compiled by Samuel C. Clough in "Remarks on the Compilation of the Boston Book of Possessions," Publ. CSM (Boston: 1932), XXVII, 16-21 with the names of the church members in The Records of the First Church of Boston.

The list of owners of property in 1645 compiled by George Lamb for the Boston Registry Department series includes 213 males. At least ten of them were dead or nonresident in 1645, but of the 203 remaining, 154 (seventy-six percent) were church members and another eight joined the church or became freemen by 1665.[39]

This disparity needs an explanation. The Clough-Lamb lists may very well include more nonresidents than the few I have eliminated and they do not include men who only rented their homes. Rutman's figures are certainly based on a more complete set of names than Clough or Lamb used, but it may be that his list is, in fact, too complete. The Clough-Lamb lists have the advantage of including only permanent residents of the Shawmut peninsula where Rutman counted as an inhabitant of Boston anyone paying the town's taxes or living on land under the town's jurisdiction, even if they resided off the peninsula.[40] As a result his figures include the residents of Rumney Marsh (now Chelsea) and Muddy River (now Brookline) and possibly those inhabitants of

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[39] Lamb's list is in Boston Rec., II, Pt. 2, 14-17.

[40] Winthrop's Boston, p. 294.

Braintree who chose to pay Boston taxes. Unfortunately, he compiled his list of church members exclusively from the records of Boston's First Church, located on Shawmut, without compensating for the facts that many of the inhabitants of Muddy River belonged to the church of Roxbury (much nearer than the Boston church), that some of the Rumney Marsh people attended church at Charlestown or Lynn and that Braintree had a church of its own.[41] The population of these areas was probably quire small in the earlier part of the period 1630-1650, but as it grew larger so did the error in Winthrop's Boston.[42]

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[41] Ibid., pp. 94, 260; Mellen Chamberlain, A Documentary History of Chelsea (Boston: 1908), II, 187-8.

[42] Estimates of the population of these areas amount to little more than guesses, but for what it is worth John Gould Curtis put the number of families resident at Muddy River at about twenty-five in 1650. History of the Town of Brookline Massachusetts (Boston: 1933), p. 25. In 1674 the tax list for Muddy River contained sixty-four names, that for Rumney Marsh (possibly incomplete) thirty. The 1688 assigned forty-eight "heads" to Muddy River and forty-two to Rumney Marsh. Boston Rec., I, 20, 145. Rutman's text does not make clear if he counted the inhabitants of Braintree who chose to pay Boston taxes as residents of Boston up until 1640 only, when Braintree was established, or all the way to 1649. Winthrop's Boston, pp. 95-96.

Rutman also counts as inhabitants of Boston all those renting their homes or lodgings where the Clough-Lamb lists count owners of property. He places the number of Boston residents owning no land as eighteen percent of the total number in 1639 and twenty-nine percent in 1649, both substantial percentages.[43] Yet, since Boston served as the chief port of entry for all New England, many of these people, especially those who rented lodgings rather than houses, may not have been "residents" at all, but only transients who stayed in Boston a comparatively short time and then went back to England or moved on to permanent residences in some other New England town. Many may even have joined the churches in their permanent homes.

The reverse process, residents of other towns moving to Boston, creates similar problems on a more massive scale. Boston's population grew well out of proportion to the rest of the colony's, especially after 1644 when most of the thousand or so people who moved into the town came in from the surrounding towns. Rutman finds that few of the males among these newcomers joined the Boston church, a circumstance he attributes to the fact that they "had in mind the material opportunities awaiting them, not thoughts of heaven and hell."[44] That is a gratuitous assumption made particularly dubious by the evidence presented above, which shows that the towns surrounding Boston had a very high percentage of adult males who belonged to their churches. Many of these newcomers, like Thomas Roberts of Roxbury, a fuller who moved to Boston in 1644, may have already joined the church of their home town and preferred to retain this bond rather than seek dismission to the church of Boston. Through the principle of "communion of churches" Roberts and others like him gained access to the sacrament and had their children baptised at the Boston church without ever joining it. Roberts became in effect, a de facto member, the Boston church even calling him "our brother" in 1651 though he technically still belonged to the church of Roxbury.[45] Rutman discovered forty-six families who belonged to other churches but who had their children baptised at the Boston church through the "communion of churches." These forty-six represent an impressive number in a town where Rutman can identify only 481 families in 1649 and yet they do not account for every Boston resident who belonged to the church of another town since some men may not have had children in this period or if they did, they may have taken them to their home church for baptism.[46]

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[43] Winthrop's Boston, p. 195.

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Boston Rec., VI, 85; Records of the First Church of Boston, I, 304, 320.

Given all these factors Boston may have had as high a percentage of adult male church members as other towns in the 1640's. By 1688, however, there as elsewhere the percentage showed a marked decrease. The Boston tax list of 1688 contains the names of 1175 adults (excluding those living at Rumney Marsh and Muddy River). Only 175 were members of one of Boston's three churches, while seventeen others although not on the church rolls were freemen according to the General Court's list. This makes a total of 192 potential voters, a scant sixteen percent of the total male population.[47]

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[46] Winthrop's Boston, pp. 146, 195.

[47] Based on a comparison of the tax list of 1688 in Boston Rec., I, 134-144, with the records of Boston's three churches: The Records of the First Church of Boston; An Historical Catalogue of the Old South Church (Boston:

The figures for all of these towns are extremely rough, but their overall trend is clear enough. While the first generation of colonists predominated in Massachusetts' population a large number, probably over half, of the adult males in the colony qualified as voters. As the second generation took over from the first the ratio of male church members to total adult male population gradually declined until by 1686, the date of the repeal of the Old Charter, the male church members constituted a distinct minority of the adult male population. Outside of Boston, however, they probably still included a larger percentage of the adult male population than Palfrey's twenty percent. The entire experiment of limiting the freemanship to church members alone only lasted fifty-five years during perhaps half of which the first generation probably still constituted the bulk of the adult males in Massachusetts Bay. The property franchise under the new charter once again permitted a majority of men to vote so that the period during which only a minority had the franchise must have been a short one.

1883); Chandler Robbins, A History of the Second Church, Or Old North, In Boston (Boston: 1852), pp. 226-291.

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Almost anything thought, spoken or written in New England between 1630 and 1730 could have served as source material for this dissertation, with the result that to keep from being swamped by evidence, I have had to restrict research almost exclusively to printed materials. I have assumed that by reading widely in these I have obtained as representative a sampling of thought and attitude in New England as I would have gotten by extensive use of manuscript sources. Sewall, Hull, Wigglesworth and Mather, for example, taken collectively probably, did not differ much in their opinions from the scores of lesser known diarists whose journals have never seen print.

The bibliography that follows lists only those items considered most useful and does not include everything used in the course of research or even everything cited in the footnotes. Each subgrouping of primary sources opens with a brief bibliographical essay indicating the materials I consider most valuable. For secondary sources I have added short comments after the most important works and also included cross references to the notes if the work was discussed in them. For more complete listings of both primary and secondary sources consult the bibliographies in Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson's The Puritans, especially those for sections I and II.

I. Sermons, Treatises, Tracts

The forbidding nature of these works -- their dryness, rigidly formal organization, and repetitiousness -- hinders a proper appreciation of their real value. Every thousand page folio seems only a slight variation on the thousand page folio before it, every election sermon borrows heavily from every other election sermon, both overtly and implicitly, until the reader can not help but believe that the whole body of formal statements of Puritan social ideology constitutes nothing more than the mindless reiteration of a meaningless litanty. Yet the fact that the men of 1690 were content to hear the doctrine of 1600, that Samuel Willard often only echoes William Perkins, really gives some indication of the hold orthodox doctrines had on men's minds. The treatises did not go unread, the sermons unheard, no matter how much they imitated each other. Their contents might be mere commonplaces, but commonplaces are never ignored, only defied -- a very different thing.

Among the earlier treatise makers the most readable and helpful is William Perkins (especially in his Treatise of Callings and his Cases of Conscience, both reprinted in his Works), and after him John Downame. Both men had at least some degree of literary skill, both wrote voluminously and comprehensively, and both produced books which have highly detailed tables of contents or indexes which add greatly to their usefulness. William Ames wrote the best short exposition of the point of view adopted by the New England Puritans, his Medulla becoming their standard statement of theology, his Cases of Conscience their authoritative work of casuistry. Unfortunately his very conciseness produced a kind of arithmetic aridity that Perkins and Downame managed to an extent to avoid, so that their works make more interesting reading and more quotable material.

The first generation of New Englanders were too busy putting social ethics into practice to write about them nearly as extensively as did their predecessors in England or their descendants in the New World. Also, given the limited capacity of the early press at Cambridge and the difficulties of sending manuscripts back to England for printing, the early New England ministers were obliged to place first priority on publishing works explaining or defending their experiment in congregational polity rather than those concentrating on the niceties of social intercourse. For that reason the works of a layman, John Winthrop, contain the most information, especially his Model of Christian Charity and the occasional reflective passages in his journal. Among the ministers, John Cotton produced the largest number of published works, and several of these deal with various aspects of Puritan social thought, especially The Way of Life. Thomas Hooker wrote almost as much as Cotton and surpassed him as a literary stylist, but his published works mainly center on church polity or on the path to regeneration.

Cotton gave the first election sermon in 1634, and other ministers served as election preachers annually thereafter, but none of the sermons were printed until John Norton's of 1661. Before that date we have only the manuscript notes of Thomas Shepard's Massachusetts election sermon of 1638 and of Thomas Hooker's Hartford election sermon of the same year. By the time Massachusetts and

Connecticut came around to printing these sermons as a matter of course they had begun to follow a fixed pattern which severely limited the amount of new material they might contain and which forbade any direct references to contemporary political events. Easily the most eloquent and the most interesting of the lot is William Hubbard's *The Happiness of a People*, the Massachusetts election sermon for 1676. Though I have read most of the Massachusetts and Connecticut sermons for the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth, I have included only a few of the more significant ones in the bibliography. Complete lists are available in Charles Evans' *American Bibliography* and in Robert W.G. Vail, "A Check List of New England Elections Sermons," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, XLV (1935), 233-266.

Of later writers Cotton Mather produced far and away the largest bibliography and, thanks to his absorption in moralism and "practical divinity," far and away the most detailed expositions on the moral conduct of life in the Puritan community. In exploring his mammoth collection of printed works T.J. Holmes, *Cotton Mather, A Bibliography of His Works* is invaluable. Among other writers of the second and third generation Samuel Willard deserves the most notice. His *Compleat Body of Divinity* has all the advantages and disadvantages common to compendia: wide comprehension, systematic exposition and chilling dullness.

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______, *A Compleat Body of Divinity* (Boston: 1726).

______, *The High Esteem Which God Hath of the Death of His Saints* (Boston: 1683).

WILLIAMS, ELISHA, The Essential Rights and Liberties of Protestants (Boston: 1744).

WISE, JOHN, A Vindication of the Government of the New England Churches (Perry Miller ed.; Gainesville, Florida: 1958).

WOTTON, SAMUEL, The Art of Logick (London: 1626).

II. Law Codes, Colony Records, Town Records, Court Records, Church Records

Official records and law codes not only give further information on a society's announced standards, but also supply a beginning for examining the much more difficult problem of discovering the way in which these standards affect the actual patterns of behavior of the people who hold them. The most significant items on the following list are not the journals of the colonial governments but the records of the county courts. These provide detailed descriptions of what kinds of activity the colonies considered criminal and a good indication of their relative success in suppressing these crimes. The Essex County Court Records and also the Suffolk County Court Records for the period 1670-80 include lengthy extracts from the files of evidence that accumulated around many cases and which are a mine of information for social history.

Town and church records are important for similar reasons. Ministers might preach the word and magistrates wield the sword, but the record of the actual influence of word and sword on the ordinary course of life of the average New Englander appears most fully in the local records. Those for Dedham and Watertown and the Boston Registry Department series are particularly full, others less so, while some towns have detailed antiquarian histories, like Frothingham's of Charlestown, containing extensive citations of the manuscript records.

Of the records of the New England colonies' central governments, those of the Massachusetts Bay Company under the Old Charter are the best. Taken together with the _Winthrop Journal_ and the _Winthrop Papers_ they supply a highly illuminating account of the political and constitutional development of the Bay Colony in its early years and of the working out of Puritan political ideology in its first major test. Plymouth Colony's records yield a good deal less information, those of Connecticut still less. In neither colony is it possible to trace the establishment and alteration of the governmental system in as much detail as in Massachusetts Bay.

A. Colony Records

Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 6 vols. (N.B. Shurtleff ed.; Boston: 1853-54).

Acts and Resolves, Public and Private, of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, 21 vols. (Boston: 1869-1922).

A Bibliographical Sketch of the Laws of the Massachusetts Colony from 1630 to 1686 (William H. Whitmore ed.; Boston: 1890). Contains the Body of Liberties of 1641.

The Book of the General Lawes and Liberties (1648) (Max Farrand ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: 1929).

Records of the Court of Assistants of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay, 3 vols. (John F. Noble and J.F. Cronin eds.; Boston: 1901-1928).

The Massachusetts Civil Lists for the Colonial and Provincial Periods (William H. Whitmore ed.; Albany: 1870).

Massachusetts, Colony to Commonwealth, Documents on the Formation of Its Constitution, 1775-1780 (Robert J. Taylor ed.; Chapel Hill: 1961).

Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England, 12 vols. (Nathaniel B. Shurtleff *et al*. ed.; Boston: 1855-61).

The General Laws and Liberties of New-Plymouth Colony (Cambridge, Mass.: 1672).

Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, 15 vols. (J.H. Trumbull and C.J. Hoadly ed.; Hartford: 1850-90).

The Book of the General Laws for the People within the Jurisdiction of Connecticut (Cambridge, Mass.: 1673).

Acts and Laws, of His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut in New England (New London: 1715).

Acts and Laws of His Majesty's Colony of Rhode Island and Providence=Plantations in America (Boston: 1719).

B. Judicial Records

Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County Massachusetts, 8 vols. (George F. Dow ed.; Salem: 1911-21).

The Probate Records of Essex County Massachusetts, 3 vols. (Salem: 1916-1920).

Records of the Suffolk County Court, 1671-1680, Publ. CSM (Boston: 1933), XXIX-XXX.

Abstract and Index of the Records of the Inferiour Court of Pleas (Suffolk County Court) Held at Boston 1680-1698 (Historical Records Survey; Boston: 1940).

Middlesex County Court Records, 4 vols., Ms. Transcript, Office of the Clerk of Court, Middlesex County Court House, Cambridge, Mass.

Records of the Court of General Sessions of the Peace For the County of Worcester, Massachusetts, From 1731 to 1737, Collections of the Worcester Society of Antiquity, V (1883), No. 10.

Colonial Justice in Western Massachusetts (1639-1702) The Pynchon Court Record (Joseph O. Smith ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: 1961).

Records of the Particular Court of Connecticut 1639-1663, Collections of the Connecticut Historical Society, XXII (1928).

C. Local Records

Boston Registry Department, *Records Relating to the Early History of Boston,* 39 vols. (Boston: 1876-1909). Vol. IV includes the early town records of Dorchester, Vol. VI the church and land records of Roxbury.

The Records of the First Church in Boston, Publ. CSM (Richard D. Pierce ed.; Boston: 1961), XXXIX-XLI.

The Records of the Town of Cambridge (Cambridge, Mass.: 1901).

The Early Records of the Town of Dedham, 5 vols. (Don Gleason Hill ed.: Dedham: 1886-1899).

Records of the First Church at Dorchester in New England 1636-1734 (Boston: 1891).

Town Records of Salem (Salem: 1868). Continued in scattered volumes of the Essex Institute Historical Collections.

The First Century of the History of Springfield, 2 vols. (Henry M. Burt ed.; Springfield: 1898).

Watertown Records, 8 vols. (Watertown: 1894-1939).

III. Diaries, Journals, Letters, Etc.

In general, the more informal the source, the more frustrating it is to use and the greater the amount of irrelevant material that must be gone through before something significant turns up. When something does, however, it is apt to be all the more revealing of the true impact of ideology on action.

Most useful of the works listed below is the Winthrop Journal. Not really a diary, but the chronologically arranged notes for a projected history of New England, it is informed by a constant and all pervading sense of the Bay

Colony's destiny that probably tempted the author on occasion to subordinate content to moral. Yet since its author served as governor of the colony during many of its formative years this heightened self-consciousness also enhances the importance of the Journal because it indicates quite clearly what the leader of that experiment which was Massachusetts thought he was doing. The Winthrop Papers by contrast mainly concern the shipment of hogsheads of peas and other routine matters necessary for the survival and growth of a pioneer community in a new and not particularly friendly environment. Useful passages rarely occur outside of official statements of goals, deliberate retrospects, or controversial pieces. The most important of these are listed separately.

Samuel Sewall's diary was something of a disappointment for the same reason. The Judge wrote so straightforwardly and so unreflectively he included an immense amount on what happened to him and very little on what he thought of it. His diary makes for more pleasant reading than Mather's or Wigglesworth's to the same degree as his personality was more appealing than their's, but it leaves a tremendous amount implicit in the details of the routine events it describes. If Mather and Wigglesworth were insufferably self-conscious and literary in their journals, at least they provided a larger than life size picture of the self of which they were conscious.

BRADFORD, WILLIAM, History of Plymouth Plantation, 2 vols. (Boston: 1912).

HULL, JOHN, The Diary of John Hull, Transactions and Collections of the American Antiquarian Society, III (1857), 109-316.

KEAYNE, ROBERT, The Apologia of Robert Keayne, Publ. CSM (Bernard Bailyn ed.; Boston: 1964), XLII, 243-341.

MATHER, COTTON, The Diary of Cotton Mather, 7 Coll. MHS, VII-VIII (1911-1912).

_____, The Diary of Cotton Mather, D.D., F.R.S. for the Year 1712 (William R. Mannierre II ed.; Charlottesville: 1964).

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SEWALL, SAMUEL, The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 5 Coll. MHS, V-VII (1878-1882).

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WIGGLESWORTH, MICHAEL, The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, Publ. CSM (Edmund S. Morgan ed.; Boston: 1951), XXXV, 311-444.

WINTHROP, JOHN, The History of New England from 1630 to 1649, 2 vols. (James Savage ed.; Boston: 1853).

WINTHROP, JOHN, Winthrop Papers, 5 vols. to date (Boston: 1929-).
Includes:
Arguments for the Plantation of New England, II, 106-149.
A Declaration in Defense of an Order of Court Made in May, 1637, III, 422-426.
Defense of the Negative Voice, IV, 380-391.
A Discourse on Arbitrary Government, IV, 468-488.
The Humble Request of his Majesties loyall Subjects, the Governour and the Company late gone for New England, II, 231-33.
A Modell of Christian Charity, II, 282-295.

IV. Secondary Sources

ADAMS, GEORGE BURTON, Constitutional History of England (2nd ed.; New York: 1962).

ALLEN, J.W., A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (reprinted with revised bibliography; London: 1957).

ANDREWS, CHARLES M. The River Towns of Connecticut (Baltimore: 1889).

BAILYN, Bernard, "The Apologia of Robert Keayne," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, VII (1950), 568-587. See Chap. III, note 55.

_____, Education in the Forming of American Society (Chapel Hill: 1960).

_____, The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century (New York: 1964). A Harper Torchbook. Careless use of evidence and the obvious subordination of some data to a preconceived thesis vitiate what might have been an outstanding fusion of economic and social history. Bailyn, like others, pictures a medieval-aristocratic Puritan order subverted by a modern, commercial one based on a rising class of secular merchants and in the process he makes dubious use of some of his sources and ignores evidence that might lead to another conclusion. See Chap. IV, notes 59-66.

BAILYN, BERNARD, ed., *Pamphlets of the American Revolution,* 1 vol. to date (Cambridge, Mass.: 1965-). The best concise summary of the ideology of the Revolutionary generation yet produced.

_____, "Political Experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America," *American Historical Review,* LXVII (1962), 339-351.

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DAWES, NORMAN H., "Titles as Symbols of Prestige in Seventeenth-Century New England," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, VI (1949), 69-83.

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______, The Rise of Puritanism (New York: 1957). A Harper Torchbook.
Three subtle, erudite works not always easy to follow. Together they make up an excellent description of the English religious background in general and English Puritanism in particular.

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HOLMES, THOMAS J., Cotton Mather, A Bibliography of His Works, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: 1940).

HUDSON, WINTHROP, "Puritanism and the Spirit of Capitalism," Church History, XVIII (1949), 3-17. See Chap. IV, note 42.

HUTCHINSON, THOMAS, History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts Bay, 3 vols. (L.S. Mayo ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: 1936).

JAMES, MARGARET, Social Problems and Policy During the Puritan Revolution 1640-1660 (London: 1930). See Chap. V, note 1.

JORDAN, WILBUR K., Philanthropy in England 1480-1660 (London: 1959).

KELSO, ROBERT, The History of Public Poor Relief in Massachusetts 1620-1920 (Boston: 1922). The sooner this work is replaced by a competent history the better. See Chap. V, note 19a.

KELSO, RUTH, The Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, XIV (1929).

KNAPPEN, M.M., Tudor Puritanism (Chicago: 1939).

LOVEJOY, ARTHUR O., The Great Chain of Being (New York: 1960). See Chap. I, note 4.

MAINE, JACKSON TURNER, The Social Structure of Revolutionary America (Princeton: 1965).

MICHAELSEN, ROBERT S., "Changes in the Puritan Concept of Calling or Vocation," The New England Quarterly, XXVI (1953), 315-336. The author attempts to show a basic change in Puritan thinking about the doctrine of calling between the period embracing William Perkins and John Cotton and that including Richard Baxter and Cotton Mather. I find his distinctions unproven and rather artificial. See Chap. IV, note 42.

MIDDLEKAUF, ROBERT, Ancients and Axioms (New Haven: 1963).

MILLER, PERRY, *Errand into the Wilderness* (New York: 1964). A Harper Torchbook.

______, "From the Covenant to the Revival," in James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison ed., *Religion in American Life*, 4 vols. (Princeton: 1961), I, 322-368.

______, *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Boston: 1959). A Beacon Press paperback.

______, *The New England Mind, From Colony to Province* (Boston: 1961). A Beacon Press paperback.

______, *The New England Mind, The Seventeenth Century* (Boston: 1961). A Beacon Press paperback. Miller could ignore evidence when he chose to and construct magnificent *non sequiturs* on occasion, yet his achievement in these and other volumes remains remarkable. The books in the *New England Mind* series are among those few works which become more useful rather than less as the reader's own knowledge of their subject increases. If some of my conclusions seem only echoes of Miller's, it is because only after having read some of the material he had did I begin to appreciate in full what he meant.

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OWEN, DAVID, English Philanthropy, 1660-1960 (Cambridge, Mass.: 1964).

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DE ROOVER, RAYMOND, "The Concept of Just Price: Theory and Economic Policy," Journal of Economic History, XVIII (1958), 418-438.

RUTMAN, DARRELL B., "The Mirror of Puritan Authority," in George Billias ed., Law and Authority in Colonial America (Barre, Mass.: 1965), 149-167. See the Introduction, note 9.

_____, Winthrop's Boston (Chapel Hill: 1965). This book does not lack either new information or valuable insights, but taken together with "The Mirror of Puritan Authority" its overall interpretation strikes me as doubtful. By setting the Puritans impossible goals Rutman can tell the story of their failure to meet them and dismiss Puritanism as irrelevant after 1648. The whole work, for all its vaunted originality, comes down to a variant on the timeworn and unprofitable theme of the waning of the middle ages and the birth of the modern world, this time set in a village of five hundred families on an obscure peninsula of an uninhabited wilderness. See also Chapter IV, note 75.

SAVAGE, JAMES, A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England, 4 vols. (Boston: 1860-1862).

SHIPTON, CLIFFORD, "Ye Mystery of Ye Ages Solved," Harvard Alumni Bulletin, LVII (Dec., 1954), 258-263.

_____ and SIBLEY, JOHN L., Sibley's Harvard Graduates, 13 vols. to date (Cambridge, Mass.: 1873-).

TAWNEY, R. H., Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York: 1963). A Mentor paperback. Would that we all wrote as Tawney could. The book, however, contains very little on New England Puritanism and I am not quite convinced of the author's contentions about Puritanism and capitalism in England itself. Having argued convincingly for the thesis that religion and the economic system mutually affected each other, he never makes the actual interrelationship clear. Nor does he explain why New England Puritan economic thought took a similar direction to that in England despite the radical difference between the two areas' economies. See also Chap. IV, note 42 and Chap. V, note 1.

TILLYARD, E.M.W., The Elizabethan World Picture (New York: 1944).

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I put Woodhouse on this list to include the shortest, best documented, most lucid account of the much discussed connection between Puritanism and democracy. In talking about the EnglishPuritans Woodhouse has a legitimate case: some of them did end up as Levellers, though his attempts to emphasize their "secular" nature tends to weaken his own arguments. Unfortunately, Levellerism had no equivalent on the other side of the Atlantic, and most attempts to derive American democracy from New England Puritanism either founder on the realities of the New World or involve such a simple (almost brute) level of generalization and analysis that nothing much can be said either in criticism or elaboration of their contentions. All the advocates for the Puritanical origins of democracy, even Woodhouse, tend to work too much by analogy: the immediacy of every soul to God does not necessarily imply the immediacy of every citizen to political power.

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